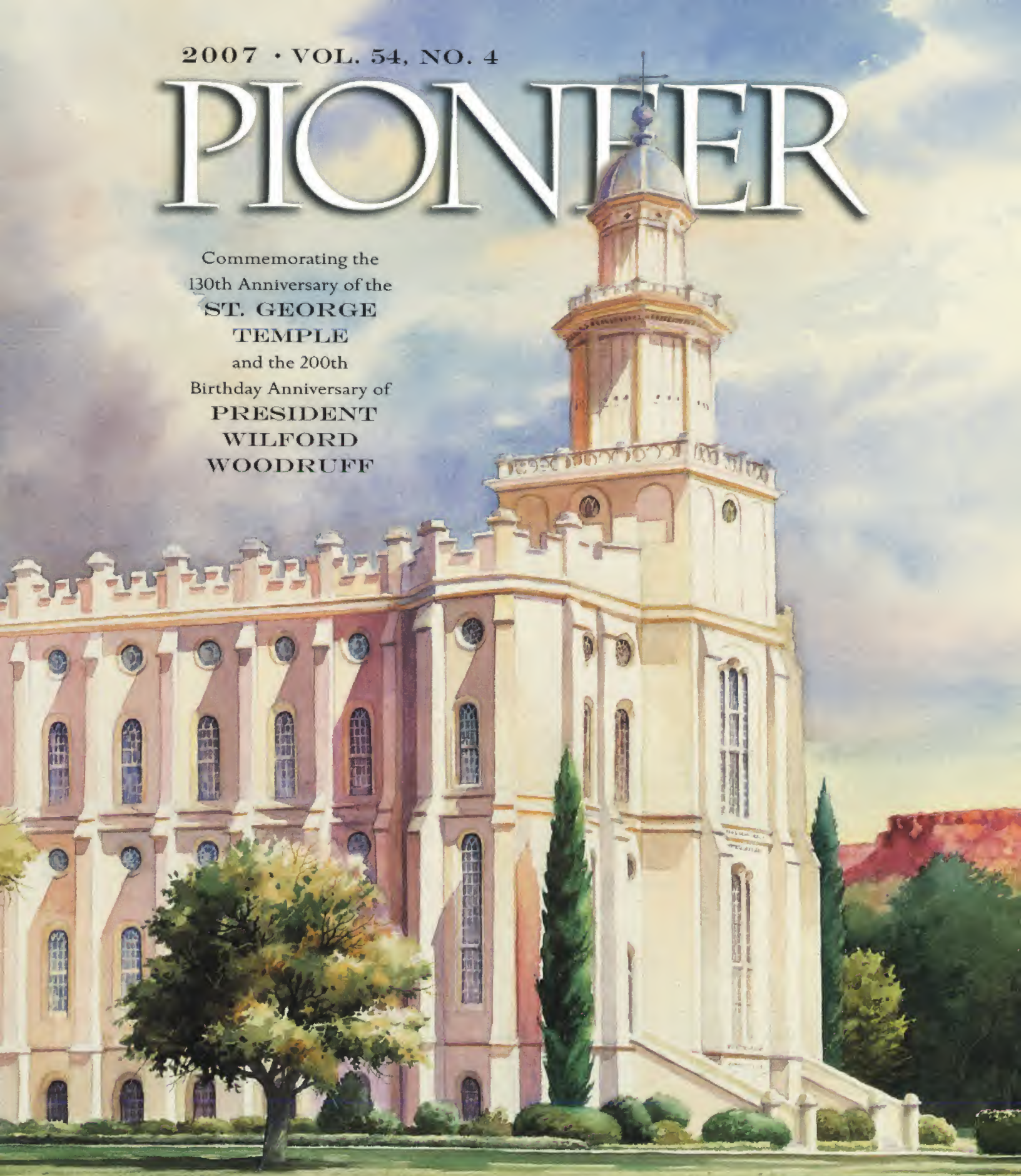
2007 · VOL. 54, NO. 4

# PIONEER

Commemorating the
130th Anniversary of the
ST. GEORGE
TEMPLE
and the 200th
Birthday Anniversary of
PRESIDENT
WILFORD
WOODRUFF



Published by the Sons of Utah Pioneers
*Pioneering yesterday, today, and tomorrow*

2007 • Vol. 54, No. 4

# PIONEER

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**COVER ART:** *"St. George Temple Morning" © by Roland Lee, Utah artist nationally recognized for his transparent watercolors. He resides in St. George, Utah, near Zion National Park. See more artwork at www.rolandlee.com.*

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*The mission of the National Society of the Sons of Utah Pioneers is to preserve the memory and heritage of the early pioneers of the Utah Territory. We honor the pioneers for their faith in God, devotion to family, loyalty to church and country, hard work and service to others, courage in adversity, personal integrity, and unyielding determination.*

*The society also honors present-day pioneers worldwide in many walks of life who exemplify these same qualities of character. It is further intended to teach these same qualities to the youth who will be tomorrow's pioneers.*

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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

*by Jay M. Smith*

**Another Exciting Issue.** I keep thinking each issue of the *Pioneer* magazine is the best one yet, and then another outstanding issue comes out. The year 2007 marks the 200th birthday of President Wilford Woodruff and the 130th birthday of the dedication of the St. George Temple. This issue of the *Pioneer* pays tribute to the Dixie pioneers: those who traveled to Southern Utah at the request of President Brigham Young and endured hardships with lack of water and inhospitable terrain to establish communities that are today attracting people from all over the world to visit or to buy property and become part of its living history.

The Sons of Utah Pioneers has four thriving chapters in Utah Dixie: the Cotton Mission Chapter that centers around St. George, the Hurricane Valley and Cedar City chapters, and Little Salt Lake that serves the Parowan Valley. Much of the strength of the SUP organization comes from our Dixie component. We hope this issue of the *Pioneer* becomes a treasured keepsake for these chapter members.

**An Inspirational Year.** This is the fourth and last President's message I will be writing to you. The culmination of this year's activities occurred in October as over 250 SUP members and their wives were hosted by the Mesa Arizona Chapter at the Mesa Marriott Hotel. Treks were taken to Casa Grandes Ruins National Monument, the Boyce Thompson Arboretum, and by wagons along the Salt River. The early history of Mesa and surrounding Arizona towns was greatly affected by the Mormon pioneers who traveled further south from Dixie to such Arizona settlements as Snowflake, St. Johns, and Mesa. After the Convention, many of the attendees continued their wonderful pioneer experience by traveling on one of three different tours: the Mexican Colonies and Copper Canyon, the Mormon Battalion trail to San Diego and Sacramento, and the third visiting many historic sites between Mesa and Salt Lake. Richfield, Utah, will host the SUP 2008 convention September 24–26, 2008.

**SUP's 75th anniversary: 2008.** The official beginning of the Sons of Utah Pioneers occurred on March 29, 1933. We will be celebrating this anniversary next year. As part of the year, we have decided to refurbish the library and office areas of our National Headquarters Building. Beginning in the spring, we will be hosting several open houses for neighbors and friends. I invite each reader to come to 3301 East 2920 South in Salt Lake City to visit the library, the memorialization boards, the artifacts and markers on display on the North patio. Perhaps you will find information that is completely new to you concerning your ancestors.

During the past few years I have helped produce two family books for pioneers Andrew Wood Cooley and Joseph Johnson Smith. I then donated these books to the library so others could benefit from knowing these pioneers. We encourage each of you to share your pioneer ancestors with us. We know the stories of the leaders, but seldom do we hear about the thousands of pioneers who demonstrated great courage and determination, but who are known only by their descendants. We all would be blessed by knowing these outstanding men and women better. We welcome your contribution to making our library and website a more useful place.

Thank you for letting me share a few minutes with you during 2007 as you have read the *Pioneer* magazine.

*—Jay M. Smith, 2007 NSSUP President*

# THE Southern Exp

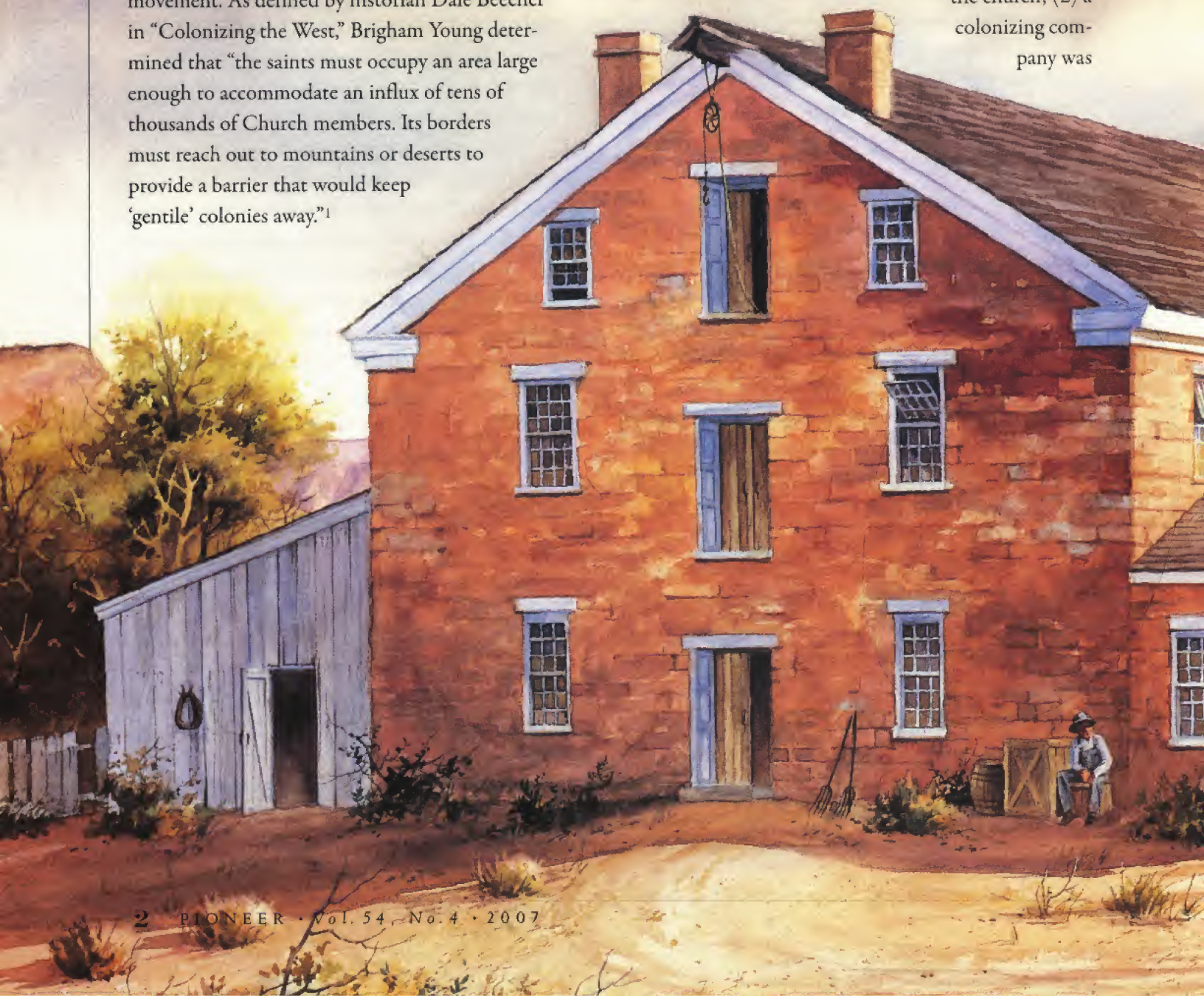
*by Susan Lofgren*

The colonization of the Church began years before the Saints entered the Salt Lake Valley. The Prophet Joseph Smith founded more than a dozen settlements in Missouri, Illinois, and eastern Iowa. More towns were established in western Iowa and eastern Nebraska, until virtually all the Saints were forced to evacuated by 1853.

Following the martyrdom of Joseph Smith, President Brigham Young carried on the colonization movement. As defined by historian Dale Beecher in "Colonizing the West," Brigham Young determined that "the saints must occupy an area large enough to accommodate an influx of tens of thousands of Church members. Its borders must reach out to mountains or deserts to provide a barrier that would keep 'gentile' colonies away."[1]

During the first 10 years after the Saints were established in the Salt Lake Valley, approximately 96 settlements were founded by the Mormons. (See "The gathering of mine elect," *Pioneer* magazine 51, #1 [2004]: 10–14.)

Historian Leonard J. Arrington clearly defines this colonization process established by Brigham Young. The planting of colonies involved a three-phase sequence: "(1) Preliminary exploration was undertaken by companies appointed, equipped, and supported by the church; (2) a colonizing company was



# ansion of Zion

appointed to found the settlement; and (3) the company was expected to pattern its community institutions after those of Salt Lake City—which, in turn, were patterned after those of Winter Quarters, Nauvoo, Far West, and Jackson County. Mormon colonization, in contrast with contemporary colonization of the far western frontier, was the directed movement of an entire new community according to plans carefully worked out by Church authorities, rather than the result of the spontaneous and independent movement of individuals.

"Calls to participate in the founding of new colonies . . . were usually issued from the pulpit in a session of the general conference. In most cases, the names of the leaders and all other colonizers were specified. Each company was carefully selected to include men with the skills and

*"The role of economic independence in Mormon colonization in the 1860s is perhaps most strikingly illustrated in the Cotton Mission."*

*—Leonard J. Arrington*

*From 1868 to 1869, the Washington Cotton Mill was the largest producing cotton factory west of the Mississippi.*

equipment needed to subdue the wilderness and establish a workable community life. . . . In the case of some of the more difficult colonization projects, church leaders gave them a special sanctity by designating them as 'missions.' . . . This clothed the project with special purpose and determination, and implied that none should leave the assignment without a specific 'release.'"[2]

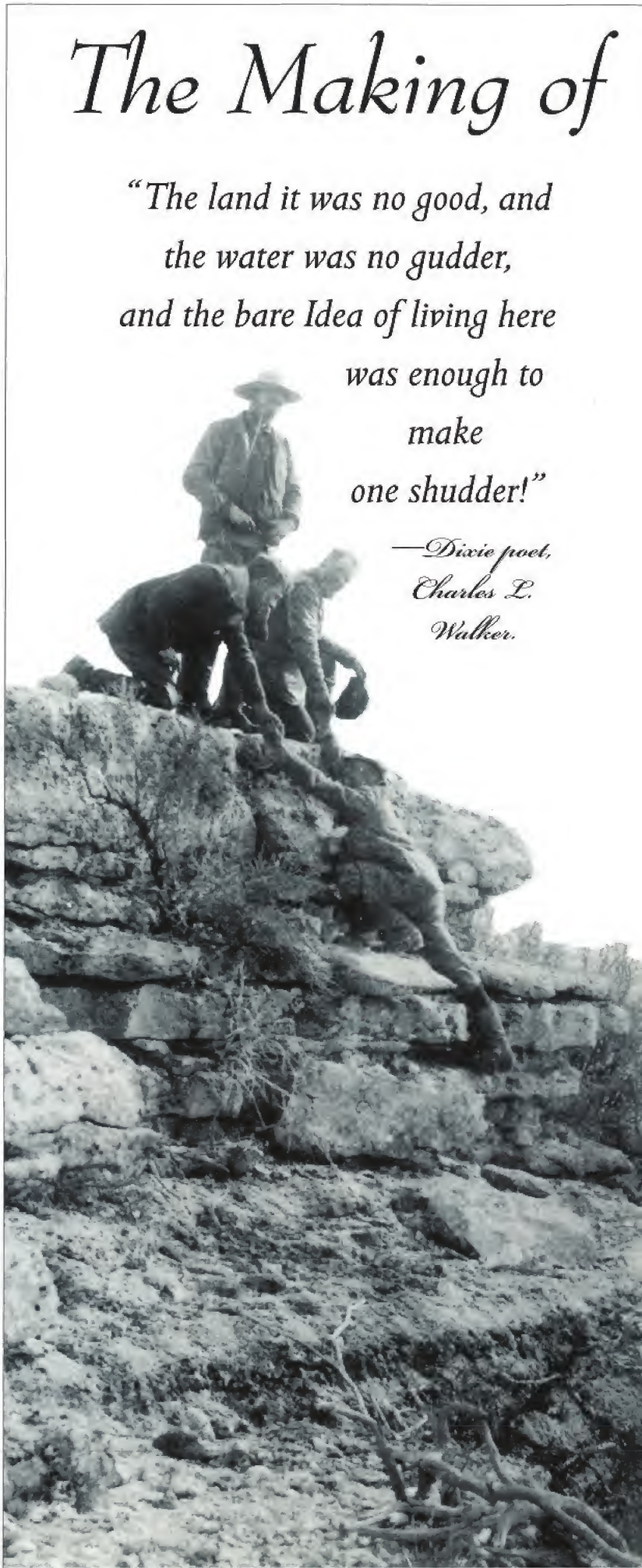
Brigham Young's ultimate goal was to establish settlements as a means of territorial self-sufficiency. "So far as we have learned the resources of the country," said Brigham Young in 1863, "we are satisfied that we need not depend upon our neighbors abroad for any single necessity of life, for in the elements around us exists every ingredient of food and raiment."[3]

In 1850, a colony was established at Parowan to serve as a supply base on the Salt Lake to California route. This colony of farmers, frontiersmen, and men experienced in mining coal and working with iron began the iron industry. By November 1851, a group of 35 men skilled in mining and manufacturing were called to found the "Iron mission" at Cedar City—20 miles south of Parowan.

Also during the early 1850s exploring parties were sent out from Parowan and Cedar City to explore the Santa Clara and Virgin River basins as possible areas for producing agricultural products.

Following the Utah War and the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861, Mormon leaders continued to expand the southern colonies to further self-sufficiency. The history of the "Cotton Mission" provides the most "striking illustration of the role of economic independence in Mormon colonization."[4] (See "Lives Out of Reach," *Pioneer* magazine [Autumn 2002]: 2–7; and "The Cotton Mission" [September/October 1994]: 16–19.)

1 Dale Beecher, "Colonizing the West," *Pioneer* magazine 51, #1 [2004]: 3–8.
2 Leonard J. Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom: An Economic History of the Latter-day Saints, 1830–1900* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1958), 89.
3 Sermon, April 20, 1863, *Journal of Discourses* (Liverpool, 1854–1886), 10:225.
4 Arrington, 216.

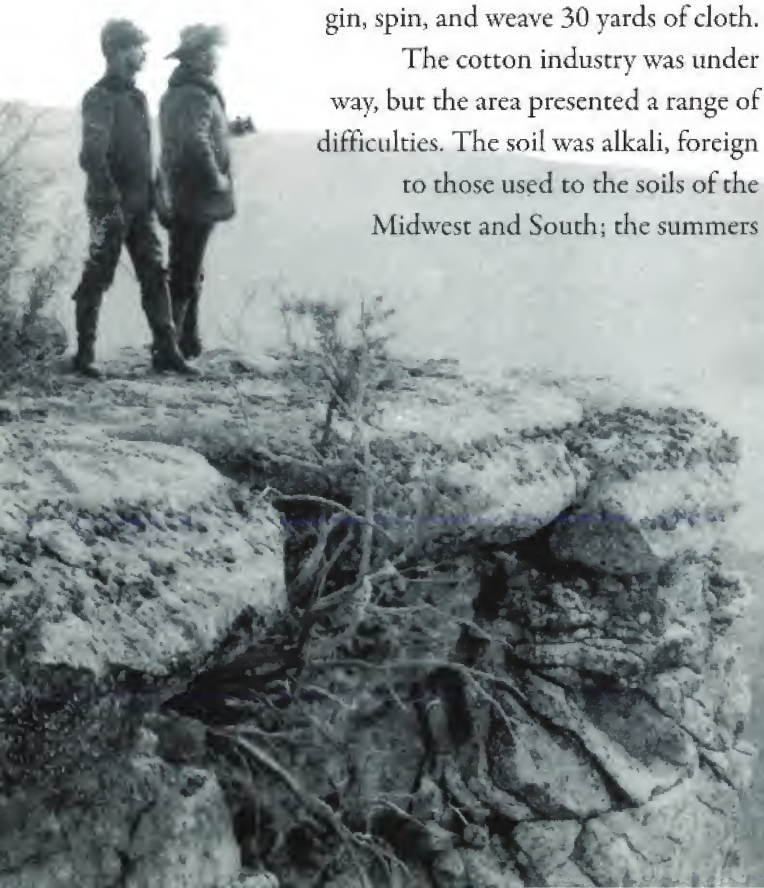


# UTAH'S DIXIE

*by Colleen Whitley*

Given the persecutions and extremities the Latter-day Saints had suffered in Missouri, Illinois, and crossing what was then called "The Great American Desert," it was only natural that they did not want to be dependent on "outsiders" any more than was absolutely necessary. Consequently, they looked hard for ways to provide not only their own food and housing, but their metals, tools, and clothing as well.

Cotton was especially needed for clothing, and it was raised in Northern Utah as early as 1851, but the lower elevations and warmer climate of the Santa Clara and Virgin river basins provided the potential to grow semitropical crops like cotton much better. Between 1854 and 1858, 700 Saints were called to go to the area as part of the "Cotton Mission." Nancy Pace Anderson, a Southerner by her origins, gave a quart of cotton seed to Jacob Hamblin and it was planted in the Santa Clara valley. The subsequent crop allowed Caroline Beck Knight, Maria Woodbury Haskell, and Lyman Curtis to gin, spin, and weave 30 yards of cloth. The cotton industry was under way, but the area presented a range of difficulties. The soil was alkali, foreign to those used to the soils of the Midwest and South; the summers were hot, creating great discomfort and breeding insects in swarms; and the water either came in torrents or dried up and it usually carried the alkali taste. One pioneer was reported to have described the rivers in the area as "too thick to drink and too thin to plow." More than half of the settlers called to the area were sufficiently unhappy that they left.



Then in 1861, with the outbreak of the Civil War, access to materials became even more acute. At the semi-annual conference of the LDS Church on October 6, 1861, Brigham Young called 300 families, many of them originally from the Southern States, to go south and establish a new community to be named for his counselor, George A. Smith. They would double the existing population and establish the largest city in the region. They would also give the region a new name: "Utah's Dixie."

The new families set out in November 1861, led by apostles Orson Pratt and Erastus Snow. Their story is well known, in part because James G. Bleak was appointed to keep a journal, a calling he took very seriously. For the next 40 years Bleak served as the community's clerk and kept copious notes and reports on business, church, government—essentially the entire life of the community.

Soon after the company's arrival, Erastus Snow appointed a committee to propose a site for the town and another to plan canals to provide water for homes and irrigation. Like all the settlers in that area, the new citizens of St. George were plagued by extreme heat in the summer, fierce rainstorms producing sudden floods, and shortages of clean drinking water. Nonetheless, they persisted and the town grew. When a census of the city was taken in 1862, 245 of those original 300 families called to St. George remained in the city. It is not clear whether those who were missing simply did not move south or whether they had come, but moved back to the north or on to other settlements. Nonetheless, 82 percent of those called stayed, a high percentage by any count, but particularly significant given the drastic level of exodus of earlier settlers.

Two years later, 1863, St. George was named the county seat for Washington County and construction began on a tabernacle to serve the area. The tabernacle was completed in 1875 and became the scene of one of the most touching moments in Utah's religious history:

In the mid-1870s, silver was discovered west of St. George, in Silver Reef, drawing large numbers of miners from Europe, many of whom were members of the Roman Catholic Church, and Father Lawrence Scanlan took a special interest in them. Scanlan was the missionary rector and eventually Archbishop over the Salt Lake diocese, the largest diocese in area in the Catholic Church in America, covering virtually all of what is now Utah and Nevada. Scanlan came to the Silver Reef and St. George area to help raise funds to build several important structures, including St. John's Church and a hospital and school, both staffed by Sisters of the Holy Cross.

During his visits to the area, Father Scanlan became friends with John Macfarlane, a Mormon surveyor who often worked in mining. When Macfarlane learned that Scanlan wanted to hold a High Mass in the area but had neither a choir nor a place large enough for all who would want to attend, Macfarlane approached Erastus Snow. Erastus had remained in St. George to oversee LDS Church interests in the area. He offered to let Scanlan and his parishioners use the St. George Tabernacle. Having found a venue for the mass, Macfarlane turned next to the problem of music. In 1868 he had organized a local choir that had earned a high reputation for their performances. The choir members set to work to learn all the music for the High Mass in Latin, practicing every night for six weeks.

On Sunday May 18, 1879, Father Scanlan conducted the service before a large congregation of both faithful Catholics and curious Mormons. He is reported to have said, "I think you are wrong, and you think I am wrong, but this should not prevent us from treating each other with due consideration and respect." Both the consideration and the respect were evident among those in attendance.

While Erastus Snow continued to represent the LDS Church in the area, other Mormon leaders, including Brigham Young, came to the area frequently, staying with the people they visited. By the mid-1860s, however, the years of hard work and stress began to take their toll on the aging prophet. He was crippled with rheumatism, making it more difficult and painful to travel every year. Consequently, in late 1866, he sent word to the St. George leaders that he would like to winter in the warmer climate and take care of Church needs from that area. He hoped Southern Utah's mild winters and

John Menzies Macfarlane was born October 11, 1833, in Sterling, Scotland. Joining the Church and emigrating to America on February 11, 1852, on the ship *Ellen Marie,* he settled in St. George, Utah, where he was a surveyor, attorney, judge, composer, teacher, and farmer. He composed the music for "Dearest Children, God Is Near You" in the current LDS hymnal; Charles Walker wrote the lyrics. The popular Christmas song "Far, Far Away on Judea's Plain" was also composed by Macfarlane.

the skillful care of two of his wives would relieve his suffering so he could continue his many duties as spiritual leader. He began to make arrangements for a home St. George.

On November 25, 1870, Brigham Young headed south from Salt Lake City to spend the winter in St. George, thus becoming one of Utah's first snowbirds. With him were two of his wives, Lucy Bigelow and Eliza Burgess.

Brigham obtained a home for Lucy from Joseph Birch on the southwest corner of 100 North and 100 West and Eliza's, just a block down the street on the northwest corner of 100 North and 200 West.

In early 1870 Brigham purchased the Chesney residence, at 100 West 200 North. Building on the house had begun the year before, but Young wanted to remodel it into a larger home to serve, like the Beehive and Gardo Houses in Salt Lake City, as a reception center and office for the Church in the St. George area. His youngest wife, Amelia Folsom, would live there.

What made it possible for Brigham Young to spend so much time away from Church headquarters in Salt Lake City were the rapidly developing methods of communication. The Transcontinental Telegraph, authorized by Congress in October 1861, passed through Ogden along with the railroad. Within a few years, telegraph lines extended south from Ogden for over 500 miles. In 1873 Brigham added a small one- room adobe brick office to Amelia Folsom's house and included a direct connection to the telegraph line. When he was in St. George, he could remain in touch with other church leaders in Salt Lake City.

WHEN BRIGHAM YOUNG WINTERED IN ST. GEORGE, THE TELEGRAPH ALLOWED HIM TO REMAIN IN TOUCH WITH OTHER CHURCH LEADERS IN SALT LAKE CITY.

*Brigahm Young's one room adobe brick office built in 1873, next to his wife Amelia Folsom's house.*

Since work on the Salt Lake Temple was stalled by assorted federal interferences, including threatened confiscations under the Edmunds-Tucker acts, President Young decided to have a temple built far from the center of conflict, and St. George was about as far away as possible. In 1877 the St. George Temple became the first dedicated in Utah and the only temple completed before Brigham Young's death on 29 August of that same year. (See "The Brigham Young Winter Home," *Pioneer* magazine [Winter 2000]: 16–19.)

Sources: Douglas F. Adler and Karl F. Brooks, *A History of Washington County: From Isolation to Destination*; Leonard Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom* and *Brigham Young: American Moses;* Sister M. Georgia (Costin), "Sister M. Augusta (Anderson): Doing What Needs Doing," in *Worth Their Salt: Notable but Unnoted Women of Utah*, ed. Colleen Whitley; Allan Kent Powell, *The Utah Guide;* Paul Reeve, "Silver Reef and Utah's Shifting Frontier," in *From the Ground Up: The History of Mining in Utah,* ed. Colleen Whitley; Orson F. Whitney, *Popular History of Utah: Brigham Young's Homes,* ed. Colleen Whitley; *Worth Their Salt,* ed. Colleen Whitley; *Utah History Encyclopedia,* ed. Allan Kent Powell; Powell, "The Cotton Mission," and "St. George."

**Visuals in this issue:** *Old Cotton Factory* (2–3) and *St. George Temple Street* (10–11) © by Roland Lee; *Brigham Young's Winter Home, 1875* (6–7) © by Al Rounds. Declaration of Independence engraving by W. L. Ormsby, N.Y. courtesy Library of Congress (24).
*Cont. on page 29.*

# "The Temple

## Building the St. George Temple

*—by Ann Leavitt*

Winter, 1870. Brigham Young was comfortable in the mild St. George climate, but he was restless. For almost 20 years he had struggled to build the Salt Lake Temple. Progress was slow and there had been many setbacks. Now, he was ailing, and it was clear the temple could not be finished in his lifetime. He worried.

President Young felt the urgency of having a dedicated Temple, where the fullness of the Temple blessings could be administered. Some eternal ordinances for the living had been performed in the Endowment House in Salt Lake City, but there could be no endowment or sealing ordinance work for the dead until a temple was raised up unto the Lord.

# OF OUR GOD'S COMPLETED"

*—St. George temple dedication hymn by Charles L. Walker*

Years before, the Prophet Joseph Smith had taken him and other Church leaders into a room above his Nauvoo store. There, he carefully instructed them about the various temple ceremonies. "Brother Brigham," he had said when he was finished, "this is not arranged right, but we have done the best we could under the circumstances in which we are placed, and I want you to take this matter in hand and organize and systematize all these ceremonies."[1]

Organizing and systematizing were natural gifts of Brigham Young and he had worked to fulfill the assignment. The responsibility to see to the fruition of the work weighed heavily now, as he faced the realities of his diminishing strength and his inevitable departure from this life. So in the intensity of these hovering concerns, the concept was born. The Saints would build a temple in St. George.

Erastus Snow was president of the southern region, but he was, at that time, confined to his own home with severe sciatica. So Brigham Young called for the bishops, high councilors, patriarchs, and other ecclesiastical leaders to come to a meeting at the Snow home, January 31, 1871. As these brethren gathered, President Young, "with a 'blast from the blue' stated the reason for the meeting by asking the brethren what they thought of building a temple in St. George. . . . The bare mention of such a blessing was greeted with 'Glory Halleluiah' from

President Erastus Snow and reflected the joyous response of all the brethren. To a person, they voiced their excited approval. Not only would the project enable them to do the work for their kindred dead, but it would become an economic lifeline while they struggled to make the country livable."[2]

In April, the official announcement came to St. George. In an eagerly anticipated letter, Brigham Young announced the temple project and then outlined the practical preparations.

"We wish the Saints in the South to unite their efforts with one heart & one mind for the prosecution of this work. Preparations should be made this Summer to gather teams, corn, oats, corn fodder, hay, & in short all available teams and feed that can be collected & used to advantage on this work. In order to preserve hay, & corn fodder, & to facilitate the shipment from surrounding settlements we recommend that in St. George, Pine Valley, Kanarra, Pinto, Cedar City, Parown, Red Creek [Paragonah], Minersville, Beaver, & ec, each get up a hay press for baling of hay and fodder.

"We think it probable that you are sufficiently well provided now with quarry-men and stone masons, Loggers & Lumbermen, and that the work of quarrying rock & getting out timber may commence when they are organized. Should you lack the requisite men, or tools, such as scrapers &c, to commence the excavation let us know & we will bring them with us. President George A Smith and myself expect to be with you from the 20th to the 25th of October to commence the work."[3]

President Young and George

JANUARY 31, 1871. PRESIDENT YOUNG ASKED "THE BRETHREN WHAT THEY THOUGHT OF BUILDING A TEMPLE IN ST. GEORGE. . . . THE BARE MENTION OF SUCH A BLESSING WAS GREETED WITH 'GLORY HALLELUIAH' FROM PRESIDENT ERASTUS SNOW AND REFLECTED THE JOYOUS RESPONSE OF ALL THE BRETHREN."

A. Smith, true to their promise, came in late October to commence the work. Brigham led an entourage of wagons on a search tour until he had settled upon the site that satisfied him.

The site was surveyed, the corner and center posts set. Brigham Young sent out word for the people to gather at noon on Thursday, November 9, 1871, for the groundbreaking and dedication service. It was a grand event. A large crowd gathered, more than 40 carriages and wagons filled with excited people. George Staheli's Swiss Brass Band from Santa Clara played. John McFarlane's excellent choir from St. George sang "The Spirit of God Like a Fire Is Burning." George A Smith's dedicatory prayers included these stirring words: "We thank thee, O God, for these barren hills, and for the shelter of these rugged rocks and deserts as peaceful dwelling places for thy Saints. . . . Bless this ground upon which this temple is to be erected that it may be held sacred for this purpose; yea, that it never be under the dominion or control of the wicked. Our Father, do thou bless our brother, Erastus Snow, impart unto him wisdom and power to minister to Thy people in this region."[4]

Erastus Snow would need the wisdom and power that Apostle Smith had prayed for him, for much responsibility for the endless details of the project would fall upon him.

When Brigham spoke, he asked the people to support Erastus Snow and the First Presidency with one heart and one mind, and he called for them to manifest their willingness with uplifted hands. Every hand went up. And so the grand project was launched.

By three o'clock that afternoon, men had returned with whatever implements they possessed to begin the tedious process of excavation with pick and shovel. They began loading dirt, shovelful by shovelful, onto wagons to be drawn away. The digging had not gone far when they realized that the south end of the site was wet and marshy. Edward L. Parry, appointed as chief mason, wrote of the discovery, "It was so soft in places that a fence pole could be pressed in from twelve to fifteen feet with ease. This caused considerable anxiety as to the best way of making it substantial enough to sustain the enormous weight of the building."[5]

Making a firm foundation would require extraordinary measures. George A. Smith recounted their search for a solution for both the soft earth and the foundation: "President Young, Erastus Snow and myself went in search of rock. We examined both sides of the Black Ridge, west of St. George. . . . It is black volcanic rock—too hard to be worked with ordinary tools. It was thought by culling over considerable territory that we could find enough to build the foundation and carry the building above the dampness of the ground and mineral when sandstone may be safely used."[6]

It was a fortunate find. Thousands of tons of the volcanic rock would be laboriously quarried, hauled to the site, and pounded into the marshy ground before the ground would be sufficiently stable to hold the 12 foot thick foundation. The genius of the accomplishment would be William Carter, who contrived a heavy pile driver from a lead-filled cannon and then rigged a horse-powered hoist that could drop it a million times or more, driving the hard rock deep into the soft ground.

Miraculously, it seemed, there were men qualified to match the demanding requirements. Brigham Young appointed Truman O. Angell to create the design. Miles P. Romney, master builder, became the general building superintendent. Robert Gardner was assigned to be chief lumberman. Edward L. Parry supervised the stone cutting and the mason work: George Jarvis was responsible to design and build the scaffolding. Archibald McNeil took charge of the rock quarrying. William Burt headed the plastering and the decoration. Alexander McDonald was the dispenser of commodities from the Tithing Office. And John O. Angus was timekeeper.

Men of the surrounding valleys, devoted as they were, were a small force compared to what was needed. They needed an army of men: Men to quarry stone, and men to shape it. Men to manage mule teams to transport the heavy stone. Men to cut timber, men to mill it into lumber, and men to haul it from the mountain to the site. Men to build roads to the quarries and across the desert to the mountains. A call to enlistment went forth through the northern settlements. The Brethren rode from settlement to settlement, declaring the need and summoning help.

All over the territory, the people responded. A dedicated temple was the desire of their collective hearts. The

people were willing to make the necessary sacrifices to help the work along. By the time the temple was completed, men and materials had come from more than 50 settlements throughout the territory.

As men finished their fall harvest, they left their families to fend for themselves, while they spent the winter months in the various labors of temple building. From Sanpete County came 100 men, 10 or more from each settlement. Their coming left women and children at home to care for farm chores and provide for themselves. Mary Larsen Ahlstrom, home with four children, expecting her fifth, wrote cryptically, "Fourteen men were called from Ephraim to go down to St. George to work on the Temple. Peter was one of them. He was away all winter and we got along as best we could."[7]

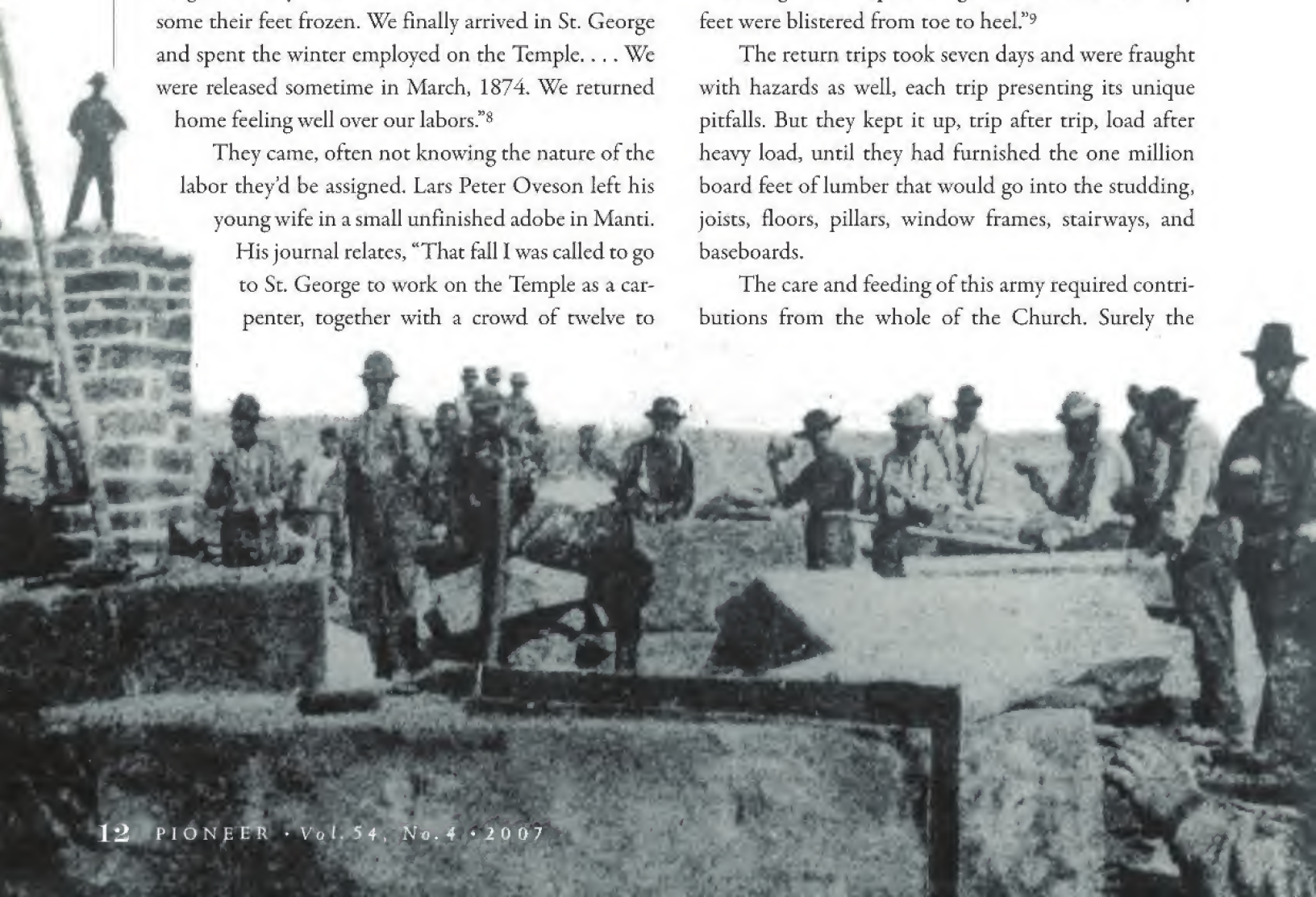
The journey itself demanded hardiness. Thomas Crowther of Fountain Green recorded, "Myself and 10 others were called to spend the winter working on the St. George Temple. . . . We started the 10th of November and had a very rough journey. We were caught in a very severe blizzard. Some had their ears and some their feet frozen. We finally arrived in St. George and spent the winter employed on the Temple. . . . We were released sometime in March, 1874. We returned home feeling well over our labors."[8]

They came, often not knowing the nature of the labor they'd be assigned. Lars Peter Oveson left his young wife in a small unfinished adobe in Manti. His journal relates, "That fall I was called to go to St. George to work on the Temple as a carpenter, together with a crowd of twelve to fourteen men to work at whatever there was to do. That was my wife's first experience at living alone. I had been sent down there as a carpenter, but they were not ready for many carpenters. . . . So I was sent to Mt Trumble [Trumbull] to the sawmill after lumber. This sawmill was on the Buckskin or Kaibab mountain, not far from the Grand Canyon of the Colorado. This was the most beautiful timber I ever saw."

Oveson's account of the trip to Mt. Trumbull reveals much about the challenge of obtaining the lumber for the temple. Traveling by oxen-drawn wagons with three of his Manti friends, they made only a few miles each day and twice awakened to find their oxen had strayed in the night. Both times they searched all day on foot. He writes, "I followed their tracks back to the river and found all the oxen. I rounded them up and started back towards camp, but it was no small job to drive sixteen head of loose cattle through the hills where there was no road, and the sand almost ankle deep for most of the way, four or five miles I guess. When I got to camp that night I was about all in. My feet were blistered from toe to heel."[9]

The return trips took seven days and were fraught with hazards as well, each trip presenting its unique pitfalls. But they kept it up, trip after trip, load after heavy load, until they had furnished the one million board feet of lumber that would go into the studding, joists, floors, pillars, window frames, stairways, and baseboards.

The care and feeding of this army required contributions from the whole of the Church. Surely the



poorest of the Saints were those living in the valley where the temple would be built. Where would all these imported men live? How could they be fed?

President Brigham Young ordained that the tithing from Beaver south would be sent to St. George. Most of the tithing would be "in kind" and would consist of commodities, wheat and potatoes, chicken or eggs, woven cloth, or knitted socks. There were organized efforts to gather donations in the northern settlements, as well. Priesthood brethren rode through the towns, imploring the people to give what they could. A few days later, wagons would come through to collect the donated supplies and carry them back to St. George.

At Mt. Trumbull, where so many labored at lumbering and a constant stream of wagons came and went, a boardinghouse was built to lodge them. But down in town, where quarry men and excavators, rock-haulers and masons worked, a sort of shanty-town grew up around the building site. Some lived in their wagons, some in tents, and other hastily constructed shelters.

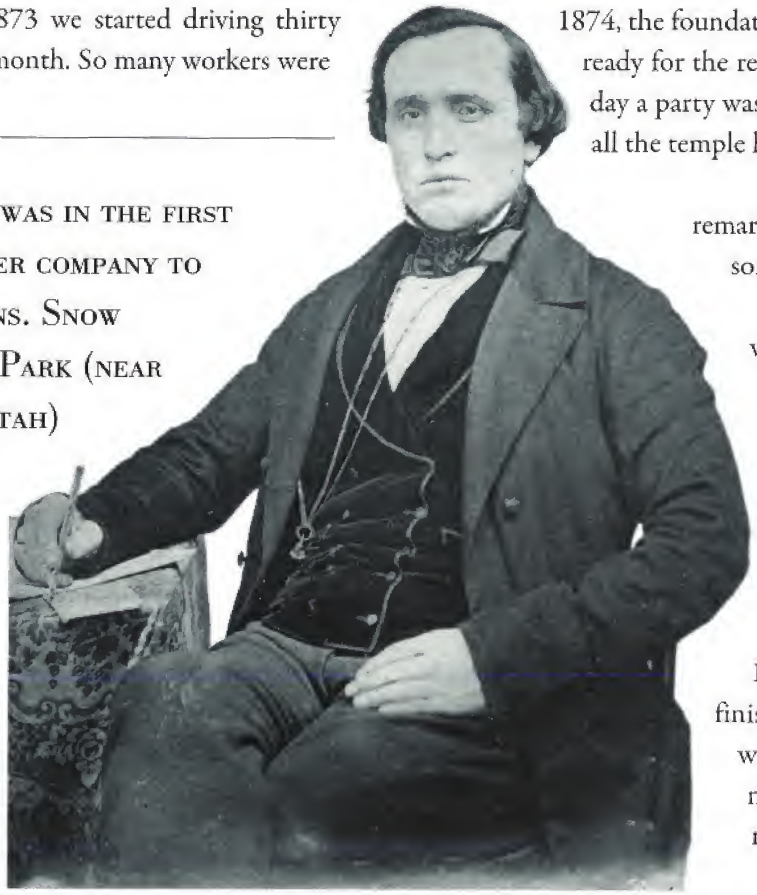
Young Joseph Winsor wrote of the enterprise at Winsor Castle, the fort at Pipe Spring, where his father, Anson P. Winsor was fattening 2000 head of "tithing and donation" cattle: "In 1873 we started driving thirty head of beef in twice a month. So many workers were busy laying masonry for the walls. . . . My father came along with us and drove the baggage wagon loaded with butter and cheese made on the ranch. We were milking 100–150 cows during the spring, summer and fall. All this milk was made into cheese and butter, also to feed the temple hands. The cheese ranged in size from 40 to 80 pounds and father took about 13 cheese each trip to St. George."[10]

There must have been a crew to butcher the beef and a crew to cook it, or perhaps it was dispersed and cooked over campfires, by hungry, weary men, at the close of their day.

The Church established a bakery for the benefit of the workers from distant places. A building was constructed, and Joseph Oxborrow and Charles Bennett were the bakers. They became renowned for their good bread and for the enormous cakes they provided for holidays and celebrations.

Celebrations occurred when benchmarks were achieved. On March 10, 1873, the ground was deemed to have been made firm enough from the pounded-in tons of volcanic rock, and the masons had begun laying up the foundation. Almost a year later, February 21, 1874, the foundation was up to ground level, ready for the red-sandstone walls. On that day a party was held in the Tabernacle for all the temple hands.

Charles Lowell Walker, a remarkable journalist, a poet and song writer, whose journal on most days began with "At work on the Temple," wrote songs and poems by request and chronicled nearly every phase of the project in song or verse. He recorded the party to celebrate the foundation: "21 Feb 1874. To day the walls were finished to the required height with the Black Rock, and are now ready to receive the red rock. . . . At 7 P.M. I went to



Erastus Snow was in the first Mormon pioneer company to cross the plains. Snow Canyon State Park (near St. George, Utah) and the town of Snowflake, Arizona, are named after Erastus Snow.

a Social gathering of the Temple hands held in the Basement of the Tabernacle. . . . Pies and cakes were handed round and wine, all participating in the good feeling which pervaded the assembly. The Brethren of the north expressed themselves highly pleased [with] the treatment they had received while laboring here."[11]

A little more than a year later, March 5, 1875, the last red rock was laid to bring the Temple to the square, ready for the roof timbers.

As this stone was set in its place and made firm with mortar, "a tremendous shout of joy [broke] from the workmen. Many congratulations were given to each other and joy seemed to pervade every heart and face. The Brass Band came down and enlivened the ceremony with tunes. The Workmen then formed into line and headed By the band marched up town, [where] they were dismissed with loud cheers for the Boys and Brass Band."[12]

It seems there was, among the workers, a general spirit of good humor and joy that accompanied the work. Many times an original song or poem burst forth from Charley Walker, and the feeling is always exuberance.

Once the rock structure reached the square, the carpenters were at work readying the structure for the roof. The placing of joists for floors, the studding for the walls and hallways of the interior, the laying of floors and the building of the great circular stairways went ahead at a rapid pace.

The enlistment of workers and the search for provisions and materials never slackened. At every general conference a renewed call would sound forth. In May 1874, George A. Smith spoke from the newly completed Tabernacle. He spoke of the pleasant climate in St. George, the fine fruit grown there, and extolled all the pleasant conditions of the place. Then he said, "We invite a hundred and fifty of our brethren to go down there this summer to put up this building and find themselves while they are doing it. . . . We call upon the stakes of Zion to find these brethren if they can, who are willing to go and do this work, so that by Christmas the building may be ready for the roof, that we may in a very short time have a font dedicated, and the ordinances of the holy Melchizidek priesthood performed in that place. We appeal to our brothers and sisters in behalf of this St. George Temple. Our brethren in that vicinity are doing all they can to push forward the work, but five or six months help from a hundred and fifty men is very desirable."[13]

In October conference he appealed again. The people responded to the urging of the General Authorities. John Taylor, in a discourse a few days later, declared, "I was very much pleased at the meeting we held the other night, to learn that more than 300 men could be found who would go down to St. George, and work as teamsters, stone cutters, carpenters and any other calling necessary to forward the work on the Temple."[14]

The *Deseret News,* November 9, 1874, reported that about 50 men from Cache Valley and 30 from Nephi were on their way to St. George to work on the temple.[15] The more men who came, the more challenging was the search for food to keep them nourished. Erastus Snow wrote to C. J. Arthur of Cedar City to say that the grain they had sent was gone and to ask how many potatoes they could send. He also suggested that the Cedar City men haul the potatoes down, since every available team was engaged in the building. Wrote President Snow, "I hereby extend to the brethren of Cedar the privilege of donating to the Temple by hauling Tithing potatoes to the place, or donating potatoes with or without hauling them, all of which will be just as acceptable as though they worked on the Temple ground."[16]

While the building progressed toward completion in St. George, the baptismal font and the 12 oxen upon which it would be mounted, were being cast in Salt Lake City at the excellent Davis and Howe Foundry. The font, at a cost of $5000, was a gift from President Brigham Young. Gifted crafsmen, Nathan Davis and Amos Howe, had arrived in Salt Lake City and had formed their business just in time for the assignment. It speaks again of the right men raised up in the right place, at the right time.

Transporting the font and oxen the 300 miles to St. George was a dramatic undertaking. The heavy cargo, weighing 18,000 pounds, was shipped by rail as far as the railroad extended, somewhere near Spanish Fork. From there it required three specially built oxen-drawn wagons, with six strong men. As the wagon train passed through the towns, it created something of an event in each place, with the teamsters being royally entertained with the best of the townspeople's hospitality.[17]

Only the bishops in the wards they passed through were allowed to view the canvas-covered font and oxen. One of the company of young men, C. L. Christensen of Ephraim, wrote of the font delivery, "We did not leave until all the pieces were put in place and bolted together. Apostle Orson Hyde went in and saw the font in place and came out weeping with joy. He thanked God he had lived to see another font in place in a temple of the Lord. He said this people would never be driven from the Rocky Mountains. I believed him, for I had heard him prophesy before."[18]

The *Deseret News* frequently reported the progress on the temple. In mid-December they reported 90 men putting up 50 tons of rock a day, with another 120 men, stone cutters, fitters and haulers, at work at the quarry each day. There was often news of President Brigham Young's presence on the site. All were aware of his eagerness that the work move as rapidly as possible.

On Christmas Day, 1876, Charley Walker wrote in his journal, "At work on the Temple as Br Brigham wishes to have the Basment in readiness for Dedication on New Years day. The sisters are busy sewing the carpet and getting the screen ready. All are busy pushing the good work along."[19]

The sisters of the southern settlements made rag carpets for the hallways. The Provo Woolen Factory made about a thousand yards of carpets for the rooms. The factory at Washington produced the remainder of the carpets. Fringes for the altars and pulpits were made from Utah-produced silk.[20]

William H. Thompson's autobiography illustrates Brigham Young's intensity as Dedication Day neared: "I had put the boiler into the building for heating purposes, and while at work finishing up, President Brigham Young called me outside and inquired if all would be ready for Monday morning, the day set for the dedication. I assured him that all would be ready. He then said, 'Brother Thompson, I want you to go in there and work for nothing, board yourself, and stay until it is all finished. Will you do it?' I replied that I would work in there as long as I had anything to go on. I looked upon it as a mission, and labored without pay until I was down to bedrock."[21]

On New Year's Day, 1877, two thousand rejoicing people filed into the temple. Three areas were completed sufficiently to be used: the lower floor with the baptismal font, the main floor area, and one sealing room in the east tower.

They first assembled in the basement level. Elder Woodruff, acknowledging that there was not room to kneel, admonished the people to bow their heads and hearts to God and silently repeat the words of his prayer. He then offered a very long and very moving prayer of dedication. At the conclusion of the prayer, Charles Walker sang a song he had written for the dedication. It was indeed a song of praise and thanksgiving, with the chorus repeated after each solemn verse:

"Glory to God! Oh praise the Lamb!
Let all th' Angelic Legions sing.
The Temple of our God's completed
Hossanna! Praise the Lord our King!"[22]

The people then moved upstairs to the main floor. Brigham Young was carried in his chair, at the head of the procession, for he was not strong enough to walk. Erastus Snow offered a long and moving prayer of dedication. Following this part of the ceremony the Quorum of the Twelve and a few local leaders, again carrying Brigham Young, ascended to the upper floor, where President Young dedicated the sealing room.

By January 9, 1877, ordinances were beginning to be done in the dedicated parts of the temple, while workers continued to put finishing touches on the remaining parts. There was again urgency, for April General Conference was to be held in St. George and then the final dedication of the temple would occur.

April 4, 1877, the conference convened. Nearly all the General Authorities were present and many stake presidents and other leaders. Meetings were held from the 4th to and including the 8th, with the final dedicatory prayer offered by President Young's counselor, Daniel H. Wells, on April 6. Brigham Young was extremely unwell, but despite his infirmities he spoke, briefly, at five of the meetings. He spoke with his usual strength and conviction, but those hearing felt a mixture of joy and sadness, for it was clear he would not come to St. George again. In fact, it was the last general conference he ever attended.

A week later, April 16, President Young and his fellow Apostles departed north, for the long journey back to Salt Lake City. Some local leaders and their wives accompanied them a little distance. As they reached higher ground, they had a wondrous view of the Temple. In Orson Pratt's words, "It looked like a beautiful mansion descended from the skies."[23] That one last look must have engendered in the heart of Brigham Young a peaceful sense of culmination. President Brigham Young died four months later, August 29, 1877.

Many years hence, in about 1993, it was found necessary to make repairs to the dome and the structure

around it. The workmen found, to their delight, that those first craftsmen had left small personal messages inscribed on the old pine wood. Some crudely carved signatures, some left a small expression. One, who seemed to see the far-reaching effects of their labor, wrote: "Many Men of Many Minds; Many firsts of Many."[24]

Consider that many men of great diversity worked harmoniously together to bring to reality the first temple completed in the West. And count the firsts: the first baptisms, the first endowments, and the first sealings for deceased persons. And surely the first temple of what we now know to be a very great many. Perhaps the simple workman, who etched those words, had vision beyond what he could see from the tower atop the temple.

1 L. John Nuttall Diary, February 7, 1877, typescript, Church History Library.

2 Andrew Karl Larson, *Erastus Snow, The Life of a Missionary and Pioneer for the Early Mormon Church* (Salt Lake City: Univ. of Utah Press, 1971), 464.

3 Letter from Brigham Young to Erastus Snow, April 5, 1871, Church History Library.

4 James G. Bleak, "Annals," Book B, 125–31, Church History Library.

5 Edward L. Parry, Memorandum on St. George Temple, February 8, 1878, BYU Special Collections, Provo, Utah.

6 George A. Smith, in George Jarvis, George A. Smith Family, qtd. in Andrew Karl Larson, *I Was Called to Dixie* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1961), 247.

7 For stories about the building of the St. George Temple, see Kirk M. Curtis, "A History of the St. George Temple." M.S. thesis Brigham Young University, 1964; Janice Force DeMille, *The St. George Temple; First 100 Years* (Hurricane, Utah: Homestead Publishers, c1977).

8 Qtd. in William O. Crowther, *The Crowthers of Fountain Green, Utah* (Independence, Mo.: Zion's Printing & Publishing Co., c1943).

9 Lars Peter Oveson, Personal History of Lars Peter Oveson, Pioneer. Church History Library.

10 Life of Joseph Winsor, by Marilla Cook, qtd. in Larson, *Called to Dixie,* 247.

11 Diary of Charles Lowell Walker, ed. A. Karl Larson and Katharine Miles Larson (Logan: Utah State Univ. Press), February 21, 1874, 1:383–84.

12 Ibid., March 5, 1875, 1:402.

13 George A Smith, *Journal of Discourses,* May 19, 1874, 17.

14 John Taylor, *Journal of Discourses,* May 1874, 87–88.

15 *Deseret News,* November 9, 1874.

16 Qtd. in Larson, *Erastus Snow,* 472.

17 Margaret M. Cannon, "The St. George Temple Baptismal Font," typescript, St. George Temple Library.

18 Ibid.

19 Walker, December 25, 1876, 1:439.

20 Juanita Brooks, ". . . to the Glory of God . . .": The Story of the Mormon Temple at St. George, Utah, photocopy, in *Arizona Highways* 23, no. 4 (April 1947): 1, 32.

21 William H. Thompson, Autobiography, Church History Library.

22 Walker, January 1, 1877, 1:441.

23 Qtd. in Walker, April 1, 1877, 1:453. Charley Walker used the image "Like a beautiful monument, just drop'd from the skies" in a July 24, 1902, poem entitled "Dixie Pioneers."

24 Interview with Steven Goesser, St. George Temple engineer.

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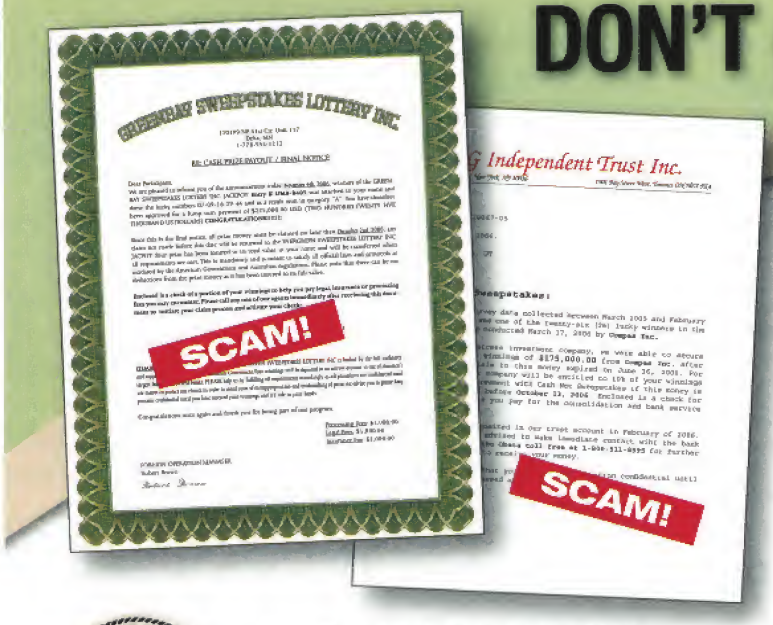


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# Grandpa Hart's Old Box

*by Susan Lofgren*

Sometime ago, back in 1974, Carolyn Owen obtained possession of an old box of belongings from her father. The box had been tucked away in a dark corner of her parents' basement since 1948—passed down to her father, Asahel Hart Jr., when his father (her grandpa) had died. Carolyn's mother, Ruth Murphy, asked Carolyn to look through "that old box" when Ruth had decided to move from the family home.

To her profound astonishment when Carolyn Woodruff Owen opened the box, she discovered a "treasure chest" containing the original diaries of her great grandfather, the beloved prophet Wilford Woodruff.

Carolyn's uncle Kenneth Woodruff remembered that President Woodruff's close friend, renowned architect Truman Angell, had made the wooden box for him in which to keep his special papers.

"We found the material and took two volumes to the historical department [of the LDS Church] for evaluation. We found it was valuable, handwritten material of Wilford Woodruff. We contacted the rest of the family and it was decided to give it to the Church," reported Ruth Woodruff to the *Deseret News,* May 29, 1976.

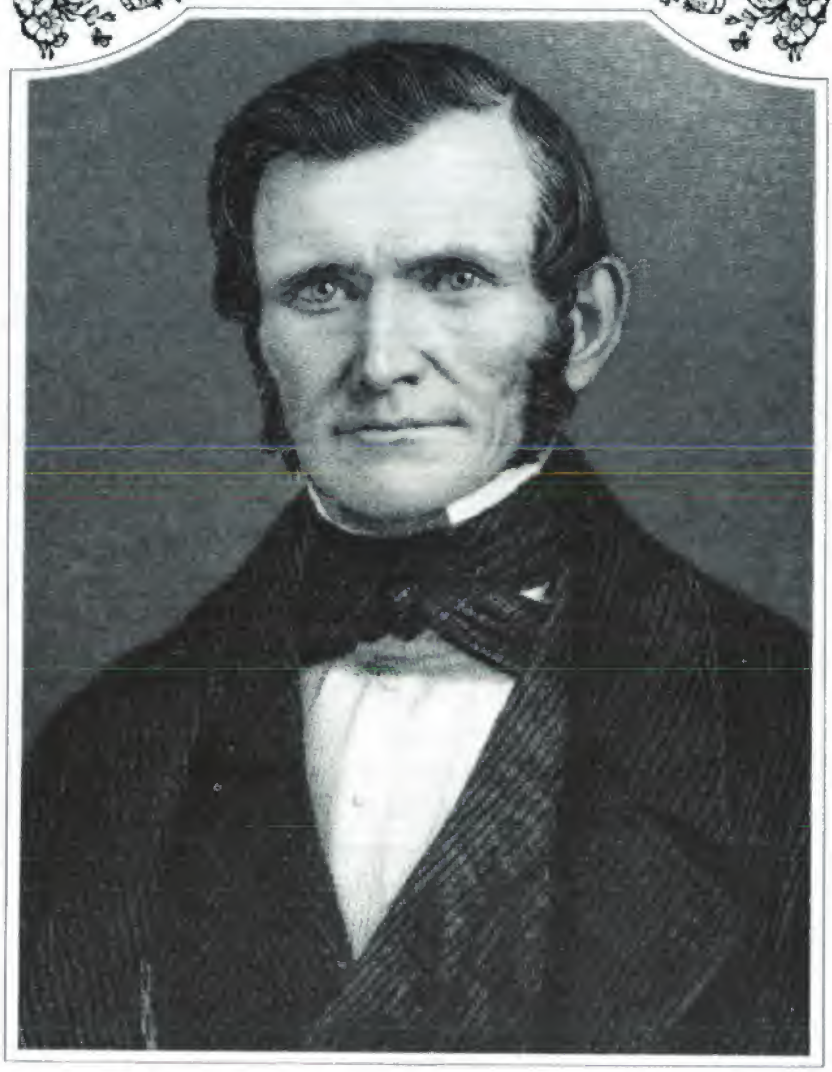
On May 24, 1976, the material was presented to the Church Historical Department and included 16 volumes consisting of small notebooks in which President Woodruff wrote his diaries and other accounts, an appointment book, membership record books of branches in the Southern States when he was a missionary there, bank account books and monetary account books of his five wives. There was

*That "old box" had been tucked away in a dark corner of her parents' basement since 1948.*

also a large handwritten autobiography that included recopied entries from May 1837 to December 1843 from some of the smaller diaries.[1] Other priceless artifacts contained in the box included uncut stock certificates for funding the building of the Nauvoo House and an 8 1/2 x 11 inch metal engraving negative used for printing a picture of Wilford Woodruff.

Truman Angel's "old box" contained a priceless record of Latter-day Saint history spanning the Church's beginnings, the settling of the Salt Lake Valley and nearing the turn of the century—two years away from when President Woodruff died in 1898. Historian Thomas G. Alexander "asserts that Woodruff saw more of nineteenth-century Mormonism than any other individual and is arguably the third most important figure in LDS church history."[2]

Wilford Woodruff was born on March 1, 1807, in Farmington, Hartford County, Connecticut; we honor him on this 200th anniversary of his birth.



Wilford Woodruff

One of eight sons and one daughter born to Apheck Woodruff and Beulah Thompson Woodruff, Wilford became interested in religion at an early age and spent many hours in study and prayer. "Almost from infancy, it seemed as if two opposing powers were at work, one to destroy, the other to preserve him. . . . He frequently remarked during his life, that every bone in his body had been broken, excepting his neck and spine."[3]

Wilford followed his father's trade as a miller and struck out on his own at age 20. Between the ages of 20 and 23, Wilford became increasingly concerned about his own mortality and his parents' future deaths. He occasionally played cards and went dancing but felt these activities and associations were leading him away from God. He recorded in his journal, "I learned by experience and by the workings of the spirit of the Lord within my own soul that the transitory pleasures of human life do not in any way constitute true and lasting happiness."[4]

Wilford's hunger for spiritual guidance seemed to be pacified only through personal study in the Bible rather than attending religious services. His remarkable spiritual depth lead him to a continual search for a physical manifestation of a restoration of Christ's primitive church on earth. Such religious individuals as Wilford were termed "seekers" and while "unsure about the exact nature of the restoration or the form it would take, such seekers waited and . . . lived as members of Jesus Christ's invisible church, according to their best understanding of scripture."[5]

In 1828, a Simsbury seeker named Robert Mason prophesied to Wilford that the "Church and Kingdom of God [would] be made manifest, revealed and established upon the Earth among the Children of men [and that Wilford] would stand in that kingdom and assist in building it up."[6]

In December 1833, armed with this spiritual background, Wilford and his brother Azmon attended a sermon held in a local schoolhouse, in Richland, Oswego County, New York. Prior to attending, the brothers prayed for the spirit to discern whether the two Mormon missionaries were men of God. Wilford wrote, "The spirit of the Lord urged me to bear testimony to the truth of the

message delivered by these elders. I exhorted my neighbors and friends not to oppose these men for they were the true servants of God."[7] "On December 31, 1833, Zera Pulsipher baptized Wilford, Azmon, and two young women whom the Mormon elders had healed. . . . In a letter to his father in March 1834, Wilford explained that his seeking had come to an end and that he had found 'the everlasting gospel.'"[8]

Signigicant to note, the Prophet Joseph Smith recorded in his journal on December 31, 1833, "Wilford Woodruff was baptized at Richland, Oswego county, New York, by Zera Pulsipher"—*this was before Joseph and Wilford had ever met.* In another entry, Joseph noted that Brother Woodruff had been ordained a teacher in the Aaronic Priesthood (January 1834). Wilford Woodruff visited the Prophet Joseph for the first time on April 25, 1834, in Kirtland, Ohio.[9]

Early in February 1834, Wilford immediately began preparations to join the main body of the Church at Kirtland, Ohio. By May he became a member of Zion's Camp and headed for Missouri and was then sent on a mission to the Southern States with a companion, Harry Brown.

He records amazing experiences in Arkansas: "We were hardly in Arkansas when we heard of a [Mormon] family named Akeman . . . in Jackson county in the persecution . . . and we went a long way to visit them. There had recently been heavy rains, and a creek that we had to cross was swollen to a rapid stream of eight rods in width. There was no person living nearer than two miles from the crossing and no boat. . . . We did not stop, feeling to trust in God. . . . Just as we arrived at the rolling flood, a Negro on a powerful horse entered the stream on the opposite shore and rode through it. On our making our wants known to him, he took us, one at a time, behind him and carried us safely over, and we went on our way rejoicing."

During that night, Wilford had a dream in which serpents were about to destroy him: "At that instant I felt as though nothing but the power of God could save me, and I stood still. Just before the serpent reached me, he dropped dead at my feet. . . . I awoke in the morning and pondered upon the dream. . . . I related to my companion my dream, and told him we should see something strange."

With great anticipation, the two missionaries arrived to meet Mr. Akeman only to discover he had apostatized from the Church and was full of hatred towards the Church authorities. Word traveled through the settlements of the two "Mormon" preachers and a mob was raised. Wilford's companion wanted to leave, but Wilford "told him no, I would stay and see my dream fulfilled.

"I was commanded of the Lord by the Holy Ghost to go and warn Mr. Akeman to repent of his wickedness. I did so, and each time he raged against me, and the last time he ordered me out of his home. When I went out he followed me and was very angry. When he came up to me, about eight rods from the house, he fell dead at my feet, turned black and swelled up, as I saw the serpents do in my dream."[10] Wilford preached at his funeral during which many of the mob died suddenly.

His missionary travels took him through Kentucky and Tennessee, laboring with such faithful Saints as Warren Parrish, Abraham Owen Smoot, and the Apostle David W. Patten.

In April of 1837, Wilford married his first wife, Phoebe W. Carter, at the home of the Joseph Smith in Kirtland.

Ordained as an apostle, in July of 1839, Wilford assisted the Prophet Joseph Smith during an epidemic of fever and ague that swept over parts of Nauvoo and Montrose. Busy blessing the main body of Saints, the Prophet sent Elder Woodruff three miles away to bless two sick children with a red handkerchief "to use in wiping the faces of [the] two children. [He] told [Wilford] to keep it as a token of the bond between them."[11] The children were healed.

An unwavering missionary, a seventy, and now an apostle, Wilford participated in the ordinance of foot washing in the Kirtland Temple, was shown the Urim and Thummim by Joseph Smith, and heralds the most successful Mormon missionary efforts, which occurred during his British experience in the spring of 1840 among the United Brethren in Herfordshire, England. In eight days he baptized 160 of them, including their presiding elder, Thomas Kington, and 47 other preachers. Over the next seven months in the areas of Herefordshire, Worcestershire, and Gloucestershire, he and his brethren baptized over 1800 souls, including about 200 preachers of different denominations.

In 1843, Wilford was sent again on a mission to the East with Brigham Young and George A. Smith to collect funds for building the Nauvoo Temple and the Nauvoo House. This beloved friend and confidant of Joseph Smith nominated the Prophet for U.S. President at the convention in Boston, July 1, 1844—completely unaware

that Joseph had been murdered days before at Carthage jail, June 27, 1844.

It was several days later he learned of the martyrdom of Joseph and Hyrum Smith, while reading the July 9, 1844, issue of the *Boston Times*.[12] The loss of his friend—the man he referred to as "Joseph the Seer" was a profound shock. He writes on July 17: "I have never shed a tear since I heard of the death of the Prophets until this morning . . . but my whole soul has felt nerved up like steel. Elder B. Young arrived in Boston this morning. I walked him to 57 Temple St. . . . Br. Young took to the bed and I the big chair, and I here veiled my face and for the first time gave vent to my grief and mourning for the Prophet and Patriarch of the church, Joseph and Hyrum Smith, who were murdered by a gentile mob. After being bathed by a flood of tears, I felt composed."[13]

*Wilford Woodruff is credited with introducing fly fishing to America, when on July 8, 1847, near Fort Bridger, Wyoming, he made the first cast, catching 12 brook trout in a two-hour period. In the 1890s, he wrote letters about hunting and fishing in the West to* Forest and Stream *magazines, the forerunners to* Field and Stream.

Mourning the death of their beloved leader, the apostles pressed forward with the work of the Church, acutely illustrated by Wilford's account of a dream of Heber C. Kimball's, August 5, 1844: "Elder Kimball . . . said the Prophet Joseph Smith had laid the foundation for a great work and it was now for us to build on it. He thought Brother Joseph was present and appeared natural."[14]

In January 1845, Wilford Woodruff had returned to England at Liverpool to preside over the British Mission, only to return April 13, 1846, to a Nauvoo in turmoil. The exodus of the Saints had already begun—"a bitter spirit of persecution reigned among Nauvoo's nonmember population, and a spirit of apostasy had descended upon many Church members."[15] Governor Thomas Ford had announced his intention to withdraw any militia to protect the Nauvoo citizens, making the outrageous claim that their forces were far too small compared to the brewing mob.

Amidst a city under siege of a civil war, Wilford Woodruff, Orson Hyde, and 20 elders dressed in temple robes to proceed with the dedication of the Nauvoo Temple, May 1, 1846. Wilford spoke following Orson Hyde's dedicatory prayer with the charge that the martyrdom of Joseph and Hyrum "would rise in Judgment against this Nation, the State of Illinois, Hancock Co, and especially Carthage and the murderers it contains."[16]

The legendary migration to the Salt Lake Valley had begun. Wilford's final purchases for the journey included a "total entourage of six wagons, a carriage, and forty-two head of livestock."[17] He stopped at Mount Pisgah with his family, who along with most of the Saints struggled with illness, exposure, chills and fevers. While he was camped on the Missouri River, October 15, 1846, "a tree he chopped down pitched backward, pinning him against a nearby standing oak, breaking his left arm, breast bone, and three ribs, and bruising his thigh, hip, and some internal organs. It took Wilford more than a month to recuperate."[18]

Wilford was assigned captain of the first 10 wagons, arriving in Salt Lake Valley on July 24th, with President Young, who was sick with mountain fever. He records the following on that famous day: "This is an important day in the history of my life and the history of the Church. . . .We came in full view of the great valley or basin [of] the Salt Lake, . . . land of promise held in reserve by the hand of God for a resting place for the Saints upon which the Zion of God will be built. We gazed with wonder and admiration upon the vast, rich, fertile valley . . . with the heaviest garb of green vegetation in the midst of which lay a large lake of salt water."[19]

After settling President Young at the valley's first encampment—even before eating—Wilford immediately planted the seed potatoes he had brought with him: "repaired to the ploughed field and planted potatoes (a half bushel), hoping with the blessings of God at least to save the seed for another year."[20]

"Wilford Woodruff was a natural agriculturist. . . . He was the first president of the Utah Horticultural Society,

organized at Salt Lake City in September, 1855. . . . He loved outdoor life, was exceedingly active and busy, and when not in his office or away from home, was sure to be found bustling about his farm, hoeing corn, harvesting grain, building, or engaging in like pursuits."[21]

Armed with unwavering faith and dedication to the principles he lived by, Wilford Woodruff in the years ahead would be a colonizer, retail merchant, farmer, rancher, gardener, and political servant. He would continue his missionary service, presiding over the Church in the eastern States and Canada, August 1848; the Fox Island and Canada, June 1849. He traveled frequently with President Young to explore and help colonize various parts of Utah. From the years 1851 to 1876 he accompanied Brigham Young on 10 different occasions to Southern Utah—over half of these excursions included St. George.

*It wasn't until April 9, 1889—nearly two years after the death of John Taylor—that the First Presidency was reorganized. Wilford Woodruff was sustained as President of the Church (center), with George Q. Cannon (left) and Joseph F. Smith (right) as his counselors.*

On November 10, 1876, arriving in St. George, Wilford wrote: "The temple in St. George is . . . as white as snow, both inside and out, and is a beautiful contrast with the red appearance of the surrounding country."[22] For several months until March the following year he composed "the ceremony of the endowment from beginning to end."[23]

As president of the St. George Temple, Wilford then refocused his temple work from living endowments to the vicarious work for the dead. In February 1877, he received a revelation to gather "Daughters, and Mothers in Zion" to receive "their washing and Anointing and Endowments for and behalf of the wives who are dead and have been sealed to my servant Wilford, or those who are to be sealed to him."[24] On his 70th birthday, March 1, 154 women from St. George—including three church president's wives and four of his daughters—were recruited, to accomplish the temple work.

On March 30, 1877, Elder Woodruff personally served for the first time as a proxy in a temple endowment. He wrote: "This is the first day I ever went [to] the temple to get endowments for the dead. I got [an] endowment today for the Prophet, Robert Mason. . . . I was ordained a high priest and patriarch for [him]."[25] On this special occasion, Wilford was able to honor the man who, in 1828, had prophesied of the restoration of the gospel and Elder Woodruff's key role in the building of the restored church.

In August 1877 (after the death of Brigham Young) Wilford received visions regarding noted men of the 17th and 18th century—including signers of the Declaration of Independence—who urged him to do their temple work. During the next two years Elder Woodruff performed tremendous amounts of temple work—more than 41,000 vicarious baptisms, 3,188 performed by himself, his family and friends for their dead ancestors.

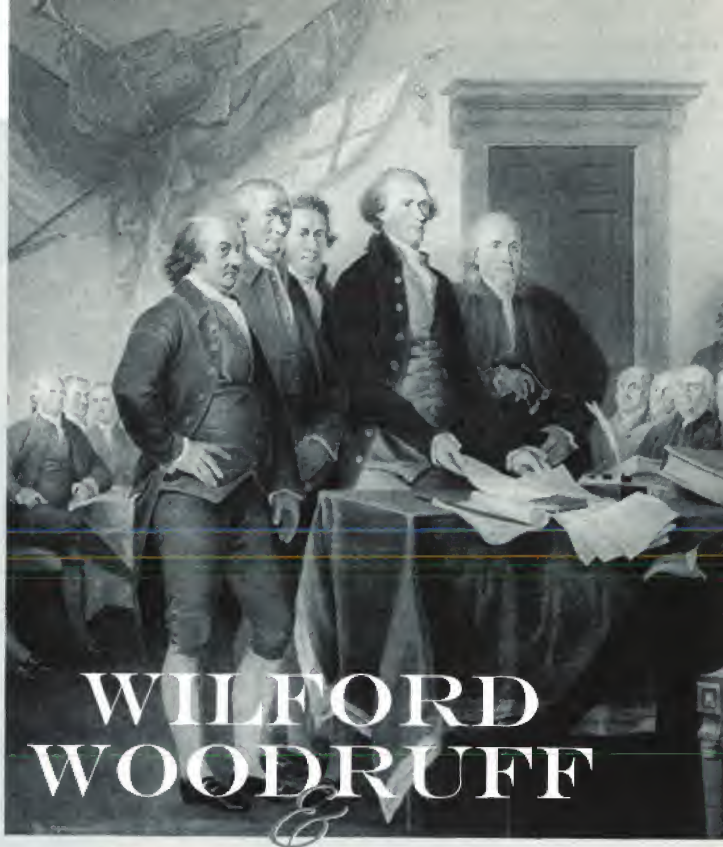
During the 1880s, the volatile issue of polygamy reached its height of intensity. Anti-polygamy crusades followed the Edmunds law in March 1882, and Wilford Woodruff was forced to spent much of his time hiding in Arizona and Southern Utah. February 15, 1882: "There has never been a time since the organization of the church when there has been such a universal howl and cry throughout the land against the Latter-day Saints that there is now. The whole land is flooded with lies against the people of God. As it is now, the whole government seems determined on the destruction of all faithful Latter-day Saints."[26]

The St. George Temple became a location of refuge, where a bedroom was prepared in an upper room of the temple. The 72-year-old exile was forced to hide in Santa Clara or in the deserts of Arizona, sleeping on the ground, in tents—never staying in one spot for very long—in order to avoid the U.S. Marshals constantly searching for him. During some of his excursions, he preached to the Apache, Pueblo, Navajo, and Hopi Indian tribes. The many years of hiding underground were difficult for the aging apostle. His routine while in exile became monotonous, generally consisting of reading, writing, and counseling. December 25, 1885: "Christmas day, I spent in the chamber locked up as a prisoner while all the family went to the ward school house to attend the Christmas [party]."[27]

In February 1886, Wilford was back in Salt Lake City, when the Gardo House, the President's Office and Historian's Office were raided by the United States marshal and his deputies, searching for Presidents Taylor, Cannon, and Smith. Apostles Erastus Snow, Franklin D. Richards, and President Woodruff were in the Historian's Office. Calmly walking into the street, Wilford passed by the officers—unrecognized—into the crowd.

In July 1887, Wilford received word that the prophet John Taylor had died. Returning to Salt Lake City after a nine-month exile in St. George—still hiding from federal officials—President Woodruff had to watch the funeral from the curtained window of the President's office on South Temple Street, the same as when his first wife, Phoebe, had died, November 10, 1885.

It wasn't until April 9, 1889, when the Council of the First Presidency was reorganized that Wilford Woodruff was sustained as President of the Church, with George Q. Cannon and Joseph F. Smith as his counselors.



# WILFORD WOODRUFF & THE APPEARANCE OF THE "OTHER EMIMENT MEN"

*by Vicki Jo Anderson*

On at least two different occasions President Wilford Woodruff spoke publicly about the appearance of the signers of the Declaration of Independence in the St. George Temple: at general conference, September 16, 1877, a second time on April 10, 1898. The 1898 talk contained additional information not in the 1877 talk. In the latter, President Woodruff stated that not only had they appeared to him, he also added that he was baptized for the "signers of the Declaration of Independence and fifty other eminent men, making one hundred in all, including John Wesley, Columbus, and others." He continued: "I then baptized him [Brother J.D.T. McAllister] for every President of the United States except for three; and when their cause is just, somebody will do their work for them."[1] In reading this talk the author was struck by a great desire to find out who were these other eminent men. A search of Wilford Woodruff's journal produced the names of the eminent men and of course they were found again in the records of the St. George Temple.

There is some controversy, among scholars, as to whether the "other eminent men" actually appeared. There was a book published in 1873 in New York titled *Portrait Gallery of Eminent Men and Women* in which a number of these eminent men were listed. There are individuals who are of the opinion that President Woodruff took the names from this book. In an effort to document individuals other than the Signers, the author spent considerable time researching journals of the men who helped President Woodruff with the baptisms, as well as journals of other early settlers of St. George. Not much was found in the publicly recorded journals of these brethren other than they stated that they had participated in the special baptism work. Then a part of a private journal possessed by a member of the Bleak family was sent to me. In it Brother Bleak records:

"I was also present in the St. Geo. Temple and witness the appearance of spirits of the Signers of the Declaration of Independence and also the spirits of the Presidents of the U.S. up to that time. And also others, such as Martin Luther and John Wesley. (The man that started the Methodist Faith) who came to Wilford woodruff and demanded that their baptism and endowments be done. Wilford Woodruff was baptized for all of them. While I and Brothers' JDT McAllister and David H. Cannon (who were witnesses to the request.) were endowed for them. These men that we did work for, were choice spirits, not wicked men. And were the best spirits the God of Heaven could find on the face of the earth to perform this work. Martin Luther and John Wesley helped to release the people from religious bondage that held them during the dark ages. They also prepared the peoples hearts so they would be ready to receive the restored gospel when the Lord sent it again to men on earth."

Wilford Woodruff said, 'Would those spirits have come to me and demand at my hand as an elder in Israel that I should go and attend to the saving ordinances in the House of God for them if they had not been noble spirits before God? They would not. I bear testimony because it's true.' The spirit of God bare record to myself and these brethren while we were laboring in their behalf" (James Godson Bleak private journal). This journal gave the second witness that we had been looking for to confirm what we already believed to be true.

This author was also assisted by Lauritz Petersen, a former assistant in the Church Historian's office under President Joseph Fielding Smith. Brother Petersen and a Brother Tom Truitts were asked by President Ezra Taft Benson to go to St. George to review all the records pertaining to this experience. Brother Petersen found the talk of President Woodruff stating that there were "others." While working together on this project, Brother Petersen, a stake patriarch at the time, felt to give a blessing regarding this work in which it stated:

"You will not look upon that which tears down, finds fault or criticizes for they fulfilled their measure and calling. . . . They came to Wilford Woodruff and reminded him that they laid the foundations for freedom. Now, as you contemplate and study the lives of these one hundred or so men and women who have appeared to Wilford Woodruff and others in the opening of the Lord's temple in St. George temple, that you study the principles of premortal life. . . . It is this approach that must be taken in compiling this history. So that the children of men, the faithful, the righteous children of our Heavenly Father may realize that they too have a premortal life. They have a calling.

"They have an assignment and it is for them to study and follow the feelings and promptings of the spirit in righteousness" (Blessing by Lauritz Petersen, August 1989).

This counsel became the foundation of the book *The Other Eminent Men of Wilford Woodruff.* The book was written not only to honor these great men, but for the reader to be able to draw strength from their stories and to be able to fulfill their own measure and calling.

*For more information, see Vicki Jo Anderson,* The Other Eminent Men of Wilford Woodruff *(Malta, ID: Nelson Book, 2000).*

1 N. B. Lundwall, *The Vision, or The Degrees of Glory,* (Sandy, Utah: Leatherwood Press, 2005), 101.

The events of the 1880s also signaled the end of exclusive Mormon political domination of Utah. The mining boom swelled the ranks of gentile voters. This gentile population, mostly Protestants, Catholics, and Jews, reached an all-time high of 44 percent by 1890. Practicing polygamists were all disfranchised and the 1887 Edmunds-Tucker Act prohibited all Utah women—the majority Mormon—from voting, disincorporated the Church, dissolved the perpetual emigration fund, and empowered the attorney general to bring suit to escheat church properties to the United States.

Under such dire circumstances, the Mormon efforts to maintain any control were fading drastically. Woodruff recognized by 1889 that Utah without statehood would remain "politically speaking, a dependency or ward of the United States. In state capacity, we would be freed from such dependency, and would possess the powers and independence of a Sovereign State, with authority to make and execute our own laws."[28]

During the 1890s church property was confiscated, revenues declined while expenditures skyrocketed and the economic recession plunged the Church into debt. The Church continued to seek appeals with the U.S. Supreme Court, between 1888–1890, fearing the government might confiscate all religious property—including the temples—as well as other church holdings. The pressure to renounce polygamy intensified again. On June 12, 1890, George Q. Cannon received a letter from Secretary of State James G. Blaine for "leading authorities of the church to sign in which they make a virtual renunciation of plural marriage."[29]

In September 1890, President Woodruff held meetings with church authorities that would change the future of Mormonism. He wrote on September 25: "I have arrived at a point in the history of my life as the President of the Church . . . where I am under the necessity of acting for the temporal salvation of the Church. The United States Government has taken a stand and passed laws to destroy the Latter-day Saints upon the subject of polygamy or patriarchal order of marriage. And after praying to the Lord, and feeling inspired by his spirit, I have isssued . . . [a] Proclamation which is sustained by my counselors and the Twelve Apostles."[30]

Creating "a sensation throughout the whole United States," this legendary "Official Declaration" declared, "We are not teaching polygamy or plural marriage nor permitting any person to enter into the practice." President Woodruff continued with "I hereby declare my intention to submit to those laws [of Congress forbidding plural marriages] and to use my influence with the members of the church over which I preside to have them do likewise. . . . And I now publicly declare that my advice to the Latter-day Saints is to refrain from contracting any marriage forbidden by the law of the land."[31]

Woodruff's Manifesto was presented at the October 6, 1890, General Conference and accepted by vote from the whole conference. The "people were told by their leader that the Lord accepted their sacrifices in behalf of the principle, and desired them now to submit to the law of the land. They obeyed.

"An era of good feeling ensued. Mormons and Gentiles affiliated socially and politically, and were friendly as never before. The crusade—a six years' reign of terror—came to an end. Presidents Harrison and Cleveland, in successive proclamations, pardoned all polygamists, and the Mormon Church property, forfeited and escheated to the government under the provisions of the Edmunds-Tucker law of March, 1887, was restored by act of Congress to its rightful owner."[32]

The Manifesto at last brought about a healing for the weary Saints—persecuted, slandered and abhorred for four decades. Soon curious visitors flooded into the valley to see this pecular society that had received so much national attention. In May 1892, 400 Presbyterian ministers came to the Salt Lake Tabernacle "to pay their respects . . . and pronounced themselves much pleased with their reception. . . . Many of the gentiles are coming to Zion. . . . to behold the glory thereof," wrote President Woodruff.[33]

On the Church's 63rd birthday, April 6, 1893, President Woodruff dedicated the Salt Lake Temple. In September President Woodruff, his wife, Emma Smith Woodruff, Presidents George Q. Cannon and Joseph F. Smith, and members of their families were all present at the World's Fair in Chicago, when the Tabernacle Choir, received second prize. The Church authorities were greeted cordially and with honor everywhere.

Unfortunately, Wilford Woodruff's last years were still riddled with crises and challenges—particularly the financial debt of the Church. Of equal complexity were the political oppositions. Although the Manifesto resolved the polygamy issue, many still feared the rise of political power by the Mormons. The struggle for statehood continued for several more years until finally—after a 47-year battle—

Utah was admitted into the Union as a state, January 4, 1896. (See *Pioneer* magazine [2004] 51, no. 3.)

On March 1, 1897, President Woodruff celebrated his 90th birthday with the largest assemblage ever in the tabernacle. His wife, Emma, with the same birthday, turned 59. The tabernacle was adorned with a huge star; white streamers with the inscriptions "Glory be to God," "Honor to his Prophet;" and a basket of 90 roses was presented by the Deseret Sunday School Union. He wrote, "The scene completely overpowered me. The events of my childhood and early manhood came to my mind. I remembered vividly how I prayed to the Lord that I might live to see a prophet or an apostle who would teach me the gospel of Christ. Here I stood in the great Tabernacle filled with ten thousand children, with prophets, apostles and saints. My head was a fountain of tears."[34]

Wilford Woodruff spoke on July 24, 1898, at the dedication of the Old Fort Square as a public park of Salt Lake City. Three weeks later he traveled to San Francisco with President George Q. Cannon—a visit from which he would not return. He had taken frequent trips, over the years, to California to obtain relief from his failing health. Without warning, following a sudden attack of illness, the fourth president of the Church "slept peacefully all night and passed away without movement," September 2, 1898.[35] George Q. Cannon wrote, "I cannot describe the feelings I had. The event was so unexpected, so terrible—and away from home. I could not understand it. I felt that I had lost the best friend I had on earth. . . . I have known President Woodruff since I was a boy twelve years of age . . . I have loved him with great affection."[36]

The prophet's body was returned to Salt Lake City September 4, 1898. When the news reached Lorenzo Snow, President of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles, he retired to the Salt Lake Temple, Holy of Holies, and pleaded with the Lord to bring President Woodruff back. Christ appeared to him, "Wilford is with me now."[37]

President Woodruff during his life was married five times and was the father of 31 children. His son, Abraham Owen Woodruff, became one of the Twelve Apostles.

The following tribute was given at the funeral services, September 8, 1898, by George Q. Cannon: "President Woodruff was an unassuming man, very unaffected, and childlike in his demands. . . . His traits and characteristics were enobling, and so energetic was he that nothing was too burdensome for him, even in his advanced years. . . . He was straightforward in all his dealings with his fellowmen and never shirked an obligation. He was free, sociable, and amiable in every respect. . . . He looked upon all mankind as his equals and was one who cherished the most profound respect for all with whom he associated . . . and his purity was like unto that of the angels themselves."[38]

By the time of his death, Wilford Woodruff was the leader of more than a quarter million followers worldwide and a new era that was entering the mainstream of American culture. In this issue of *Pioneer* magazine, we honor this amazing heritage of Wilford Woodruff.

*Special thanks to Carolyn Woodruff Owen for sharing her family history information and photographs. Her line of heritage to President Wilford Woodruff is through his marriage to Emma Smith (pictured right). Their son Asahel Hart Woodruff married Naomi Butterworth. Asahel Hart Woodruff Jr. married Mary Ruth Murphy (Carolyn's parents). Carolyn Woodruff Owen married Gordon P. Owen Jr.*

1 "The Memorabilia of President Woodruff," *Deseret News,* May 29, 1976.
2 Book review by Richard W. Sadler of Thomas G. Alexander's *Things in Heaven and Earth: The Life and Times of Wilford Woodruff, a Mormon Prophet, Utah Historical Quarterly* 60, no. 2 (Winter 1992): 187–93.
3 Orson F. Whitney, *History of Utah* (Salt Lake City: G. Q. Cannon & Sons Co., 1892–1904), 4:30–34.
4 Resource material from Carolyn Woodruff Owen.
5 Thomas G. Alexander, *Things in Heaven and Earth: The Life and Times of Wilford Woodruff, a Mormon Prophet* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1993), 17.
6 As cited in Alexander, 19.
7 "Moments with the Prophets: A Fateful Visit," *Deseret News, LDS Church News section,* December 26, 1992.
8 Alexander, 21.
9 George Q. Cannon, *Life of Joseph Smith the Prophet* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, c1986), 163.
10 "A Mormon in Arkansas," by Mark E. Peterson, *Arkansas Gazette Magazine,* Little Rock, 9, no. 14, December 2, 1934.
11 Wilford Woodruff, *Wilford Woodruff Journal,* 9 vols., ed. by Scott G. Kenney (Midvale, Utah: Signature Books, 1983), 1:346–48.
12 Francis M. Gibbons, *Wilford Woodruff: Wondrous Worker Prophet of God* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, c1988), 84.
13 Woodruff, 2:422–23.
14 Ibid., 433.
15 Gibbons, 110.
16 Woodruff, 3:42–46.
17 Alexander, 132.
18 Alexander, 135.
19 Woodruff, 3:233–34.
20 Ibid., 235.
21 Whitney, 4:30–34.
22 Woodruff, 7:291.
23 Ibid., 322–27.
24 Ibid., 331.
25 Ibid., 342.
26 Woodruff, 8:90–91.
27 Ibid., 8:350.
28 Lewis Allen (Woodruff) to William Atkin, January 30, 1889, Wilford Woodruff–Atkin Correspondence, Utah State Historical Society.
29 Abraham H. Cannon Journal, June 12, 1890, Special Collections, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.
30 Woodruff, 9:114.
31 Ibid., 9:115, 116.
32 Whitney, 4:30–34.
33 Woodruff, 9:200, 218–19.
34 Resource material from Carolyn Woodruff Owen.
35 Woodruff, 9:561.
36 George Q. Cannon journal and resource material from Carolyn Woodruff Owen.
37 Ibid.
38 Ibid.

*Wilford Woodruff (seated, left), George Q. Cannon (seated, second from right), shown here with other Utahns at the Hotel Coronado del Mar in San Diego, California.*

# DIARY *of Charles Lowell Walker . . .*

## St. Georgeand the Drag On[3]

Oh what a desert place was this
When first the Mormons found it.
They said no white man here could live
And Indians prowl'd around it.
'Twas said the land it was no good,
And the water was no gudder,
And the bare Idea of living here
Was enough to make one shudder.

*Chorus:* Muskeet, soap root,
Prickly pears, and briars.
St. George ere long will be a place
That every one admires.

Now green Lucern in verdant spots,
Bedecks our thriving City.
Whilst vines and fruit trees grace our lots
And flowerets sweet and pretty,
Where once the grass in single blades
Grew a mile apart in distance.
And it kept the cricket on the go
To pick up their subsistence.

*Chorus*

The Sun it is so scorching hot
It makes the water siz, sir.
And the reason why it is so hot,
'Tis just because it is, sir.
The wind like fury here does blow
That when we plant or sow, sir,
We place one foot upon the seed
And hold it till it grows, sir.

*Chorus*

CHARLES LOWELL WALKER *was the "Poet Laureate" of the Cotton Mission in Utah's Dixie. He wrote many poems commemorating the major events in the early history of St. George. He wrote the text for "Dearest Children, God Is Near You," in the current LDS hymnal.*

*He was born in Leek, Staffordshire, England, on November 17, 1832. After converting to Mormonism, Charles came to St. Louis in 1849 and to Salt Lake City in 1855. He married Abigail Middlemass and later Sarah Smith. His sister Ann Agatha became a plural wife of Parley P. Pratt. In 1862, at the October conference, Charles and Abigail with about 200 other missionaries were called to go to the "cotton country" mission in Southern Utah. He worked as a stonecutter on the St. George Temple.*

*"His journal reveals the stirring events of the late 1850s and early 1860s. It pictures the hard times of 1855 and 1856 and the exciting days of the Utah War, the move, . . . the conflict between the U.S. soldiers and the Mormon citizens, the clashes with federal judges some governors, the U.S. Marshals. . . . He is the faithful, if partisan, reporter of the gospel sermons of the General Authorities."*[1]

*"He spent his time ministering to the poor, the sick, and the lonely. He delighted everyone with his ability as actor, musician, and poet."*[2]

1 A. Karl Larson and Katherine Miles Larson, *Diary of Charles Walker* (Logan: Utah State University Press), vii.
2 Larson and Larson, xviii.
3 Walker, "Poems," 40, in Larson and Larson, 369–70.

***Visuals cont. from page 8:*** View of St. George, Utah, by George Edward Anderson © L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Brigham Young University, MSS P–1 # 21110 (8–9). Photos © courtesy Church History Library: John Menzies Macfarlane (6); St. George Temple, March 1876, p1145 (16–17). Photos © from Utah State Historical Society, used by permission, all rights reserved: Southern Utah #18939 (4–5); St. George Church Office #06792 (8); St. George Temple, p. 8 #06584 (12); Erastus Snow #13737 (13); St. George Temple, p. 9 #06585 (14); Wilford Woodruff (engraving) (22); Wilford Woodruff (in Calif.) #14177 (28); Charles L. Walker #14035 (29). Old basement photo, iStockphoto #3289236 (19). Wilford Woodruff visuals courtesy Carolyn Woodruff Owens (20–28). Honeymoon Trail photos courtesy Kenneth Mays (31–36).

## SUP New Members

***At Large***
Ashby D. Boyle II
Carl Dean Crowther
Derek J. Crowther
Phil R. Crowther
Sean R. Crowther
Ted Wilcox

***Bountiful***
Robert E. Lundquist
Roger Sears

***Box Elder***
L. Don Berchtold

***Brigham Young***
Ravell Beckstead
Leland Dayton
Redd M. Izatt
Ron L Rhodes
Partridge Richan
Terrence Williamson

***Cedar City***
Tony Powers
Thomas W. Walker
J. N. Webster

***Cotton Mission***
Martin A. Bacik
Kent B. Beus
Jon Bodnar
Robert M. Cottam

***Hurricane Valley***
Alan Drummond
Garth Isom
Wilbur W. Jennings
Clarence Pectol

***Lehi***
W. Steven Everett
Keith L. Henrie
E. Douglas Lovell
Ronald L. Norviel

***Mills***
J. Glen Crow

***Morgan***
Reed W. Harding

***Mt. Nebo***
Ted Peacock

***Porter Rockwell***
James H. Backman
Douglas D. Palmer
Gerald L. Scott
Del Roy Taylor
Brinton R. Webb

***Roosevelt***
Roger Wayne Griffin

***Salt Lake City***
John E. Moray

***Temple Fork***
Deloy Frank Johnson
Clark L. Puffer

***Upper Snake River Valley***
Bud I. Howard
Ellis W. Miller

## New Life Members

Melvin 'P' Anderson, *Lehi*
Richard C. Clyde, *At Large*
David Kent Harmon, *Brigham Young*
Jason Howard Hunter, *At Large*
J. Harvey Jackman, *Upper Snake River Valley*
Matt Misbach, *At Large*
Roger Leavitt Mitchell, *At Large*
Timothy W. Nicolaysen, *Porter Rockwell*
Lenard A. Wing, *Lehi*
Karl E. Zimmerman, *Lehi*

## *In Loving Memory*

Elliot Badge, *Temple Fork, Life Member*
Dorman H. Baird, *Odgen*
Melvin C. Cannon, *Temple Fork, Life Member*
Duane W. Crimin, *Ogden Pioneer*
Sylven Godfrey, *Box Elder, Life Member*
James E. Hansen, *Box Elder, Life Member*
Carlon Hinton, *Hurrican Valley, Life Member*
Ben Marler, *Cotton Mission*
Alma Orullian, *At Large, Life Member*

**UPCOMING ISSUE:** Our next issue of the *Pioneer* magazine, coming out late February, will join with the Sons of Utah Pioneers in celebrating its 75th Anniversary. We will trace the history of the organization including Pioneer Village, Days of '47 Celebrations, Mormon Pioneer Trails traveled over the years by SUP members, and the history of the *Pioneer* magazine. Invite friends to **SUBSCRIBE NOW**, or give gift subscriptions so others can enjoy our next informative and interesting issue!

# THE Honeymoon Trail

*by Kenneth Mays*

The story of Arizona's "Honeymoon Trail" is attributed to the hundreds of Latter-day Saints who followed it between 1877–1927 from areas of Arizona to be married in the St. George Temple.

The trail ran through the desert, "winding through steep canyons, crossing barren plateaus, and passing by rivers and pools of undrinkable water."[1] As historian Norma Ricketts concluded, the "overall story encompassed more than couples traveling to St. George because of their religious beliefs. It is also the history of the settlements and the families who came south . . . at great sacrifice to colonize Arizona. Combining these stories . . . [provides] intimate details of everyday life, of struggles and challenges, survival and faith."[2]

Intrepid pathfinders like Jacob Hamblin had entered northern Arizona by the 1850s. By assignment from President Brigham Young, exploring parties from northern Utah ventured into northeastern Arizona as early as 1873. These pioneers came south through Kanab or nearby Johnson Canyon, continued on to Lee's Ferry, and finally reached the sites of future settlements on the Little Colorado River and beyond. The trail they followed had various names, including "Old Arizona Road," "Old Mormon Road," and "Mormon Wagon Road."

Discouraged by the desolation and harshness of the region, these first explorers abandoned their efforts to settle and went their separate ways, reporting the sorry news of their failed adventure to their leaders and other interested parties.[3] James Brown and others took a second look at the region in 1875. Their reports led to a call from Church leaders for the establishment of settlements along the lower Little Colorado River in eastern Arizona. A year later, a number of gritty pioneer families led by Lot Smith initiated the colonization of this forbidding area, on the Little Colorado including Camp Obed, Sunset, Brigham City, and Joseph City. Within a period of several years, other settlements were established along Silver Creek, a tributary of the Little Colorado.[4]

Unfriendly elements produced never-ending challenges to the settlers. In particular, the irascible nature of the Little Colorado River was the greatest obstacle to

success. It could be a raging torrent destroying dams and dykes one day, and a useless bed of mud and quicksand the next: "too thin to plow but too thick to drink."[5] "The Little Colorado is a treacherous stream at best, with a broad channel that wanders at will through the alluvial country that melts like sugar or salt at the touch of water."[6] Ultimately, it overwhelmed three of those four settlements—only Joseph City remains today.

The year 1877 brought the dedication of the St. George Temple, giving the Saints the opportunity to be married for eternity—provided they could get there and back. These faithful souls believed so completely in the cogency of the temple ordinances that they braved a most difficult undertaking in order to participate in them—a moving story of faith, love, and commitment.

"I imagine," says trail researcher, Jim Byrkit, "that, for most people, the expression 'Honeymoon Trail' referred to the entire journey to St. George from where they lived: St. Johns, Pima, Pine, Show Low, Mesa, or wherever."[7]

Two major trail networks were used, "the longest trail leading to St. George amounted to a distance of more than four hundred miles. In addition, Arizona trails that fed into the main Mormon Wagon Road . . . collectively totaled more than three hundred miles."[8] One system of trails from eastern and southeastern Arizona merged with the old Mormon Wagon Road on the Little Colorado River. It was utilized by travelers from the Pima Valley, Snowflake, St. Johns, the White Mountains region, and western New Mexico. The other system, including the Chavez Trail, worked its way north from Phoenix and Mesa and merged with the Mormon Wagon Road at Sunset Crossing near present-day Winslow, Arizona.

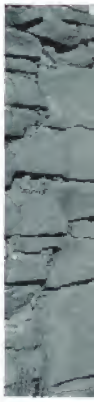
Ricketts suggests that the beginning of the "Honeymoon Trail" was the junction of the Chavez Trail and the Mormon Wagon Road at Sunset Crossing. She asserts, "It is this common road from Sunset . . . to St. George, Utah, that usually is considered to be the 'Honeymoon Trail.'"[9]

From Sunset, the route utilized the Mormon Wagon Road, following the west side of the Little Colorado River to Grand Falls, where they crossed to the east side of the river near present-day Cameron, Arizona. At that point, they left the river, trekked north past the Echo Cliffs and Bitter Springs, arriving at Lee's Ferry to cross the Colorado River. The trail then circumnavigated the Vermillion Cliffs, passing through House Rock Valley and on to Kanab. Travelers continued westward, seeking the welcome waters of Pipe Spring, as they braved the barrenness of the Arizona Strip, eventually sliding through Canaan Gap, down the Hurricane Fault and into Warner Valley. Continuing on, they likely passed Fort Pearce of the Utah Black Hawk War, with only another 15 miles or so to St. George.

"The round trip," reports Dean Garrett, "sometimes took as long as six weeks, yet couples embarked on the trip willingly and gladly."[10] Garrett explains that those not yet married, either did so civilly before leaving or invited chaperones to go with them until they arrived at the temple to be married.

According to sources, the first trip made for the purpose of being sealed in the St. George Temple was from Snowflake, a settlement on Silver Creek. "Adolf Larsen (who married May Hunt) was captain of the first group. . . . During most of their twenty-day trip to St. George, they enjoyed fair weather. Adolf and May were married on October 26, 1881, and they were back in Snowflake by December 5, 1881."[11]

The difficult trek through rugged and forbidding country to the temple was evidence of those pioneers' deep faith in the temple ordinances and the eternal nature of marriage. Their commitment provided a solid foundation to endure the sacrifices necessary in establishing their homes in a desert wilderness. There is much to be learned from their stories.



1 H. Dean Garrett, "The Honeymoon Trail," *Ensign,* July 1989, 23.

2 Norma Baldwin Ricketts, ed., *Arizona's Honeymoon Trail and Mormon Wagon Roads* (Mesa, Ariz.: Maricopa East Company, International Society, Daughters of Utah Pioneers, c2001 [Mesa, Ariz.: Cox Printing Co.]), xi.

3 George S. Tanner and J. Morris Richards, *Colonization on the Little Colorado: The Joseph City Region* (Flagstaff, Ariz.: Northland Press, 1977), 12.

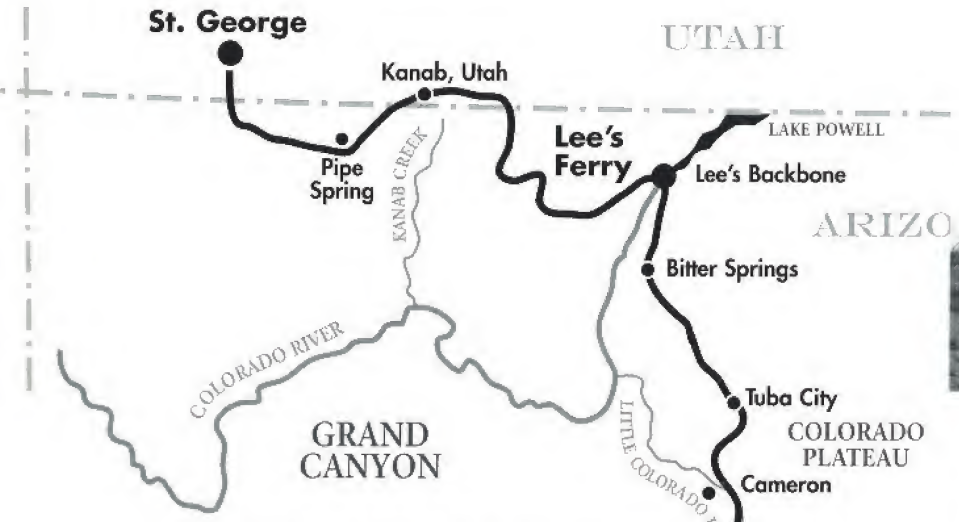
4 Charles S. Peterson, *Take Up Your Mission: Mormon Colonizing along the Little Colorado River, 1870–1900* (Tucson: Univ. of Arizona Press, 1973), 46.

5 Ricketts, 9.

6 James H. McClintock, *Mormon Settlement in Arizona* (Tucson: Univ. of Arizona Press, c1985), 141.

7 Jim Byrkit, "Location of the Honeymoon Trail," in Ricketts, *Arizona's Honeymoon Trail,* 16.

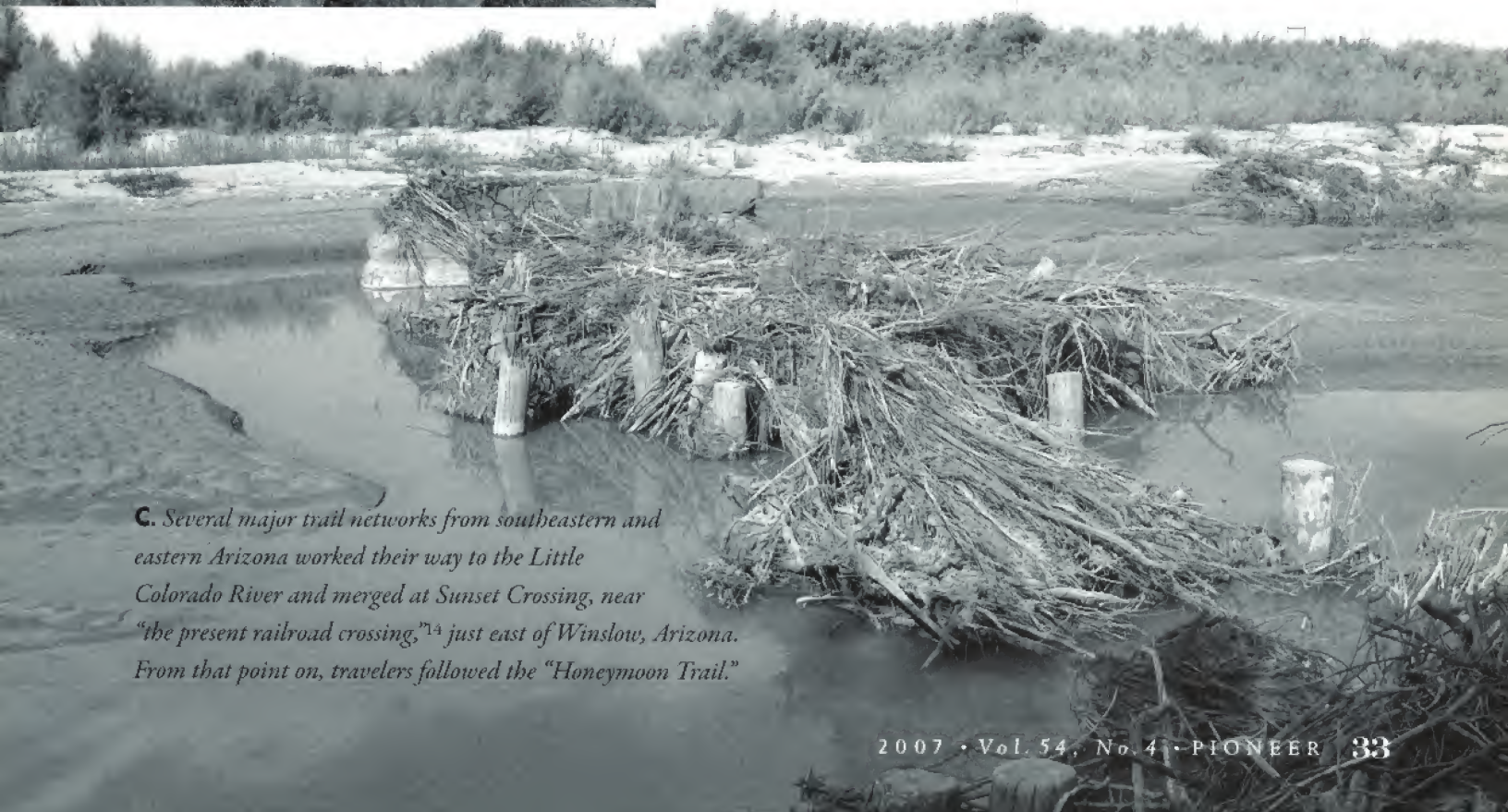
8 Ibid., 13. (continued on page 36 . . .)




*Brigham City struggled through the few years of its existence. "The country was hard and the river capricious, repeatedly washing out numerous dams. . . . In 1881 the Church released the remaining families from their obligations."* [12]

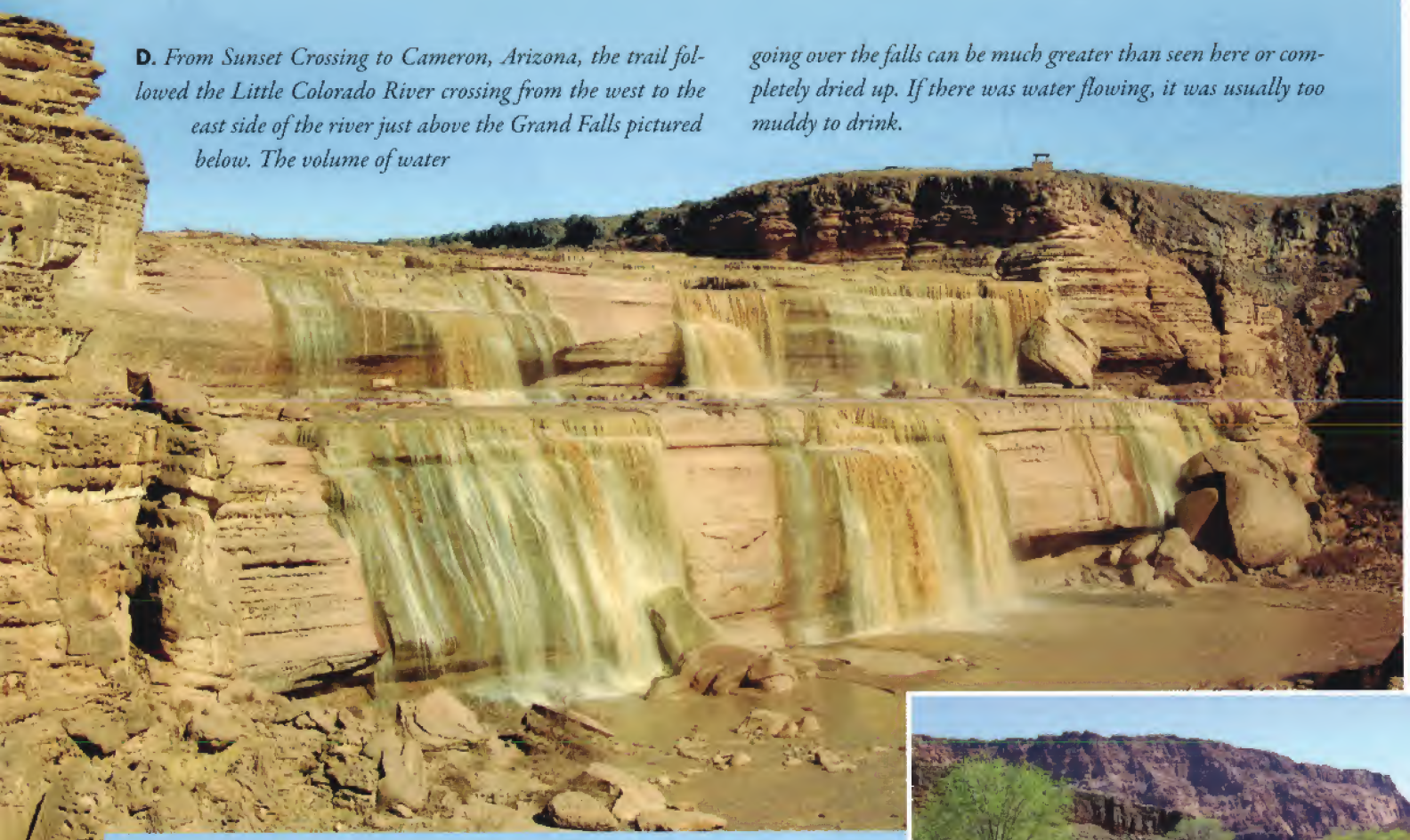
**A.** *John Bushman was one of the original settlers of Joseph City, arriving in 1876. In 1885, he built the one-room frame portion of the home seen here. The newer, brick portion was dedicated in 1890 on the 25th wedding anniversary of John and his wife, Lois. Joseph City is the only one of the four original settlements on the lower Little Colorado to survive.*

**B.** *Pictured left is the original social complex of what was once Brigham City, Arizona, near Sunset Crossing. On either side are the rebuilt walls erected by Harry Hancock and members of his family. The original fort was 200 feet square, the walls seven feet high.* [13]



**C.** *Several major trail networks from southeastern and eastern Arizona worked their way to the Little Colorado River and merged at Sunset Crossing, near "the present railroad crossing,"* [14] *just east of Winslow, Arizona. From that point on, travelers followed the "Honeymoon Trail."*

**D.** *From Sunset Crossing to Cameron, Arizona, the trail followed the Little Colorado River crossing from the west to the east side of the river just above the Grand Falls pictured below. The volume of water going over the falls can be much greater than seen here or completely dried up. If there was water flowing, it was usually too muddy to drink.*



**E.** *Inset: Lonely Dell, where the Paria River meets the Colorado, is where the John D. Lee family resided and operated the ferry on the river, allowing travelers to cross back and forth.* **F.** *Below: Lee's Ferry on the Colorado River looking southeast. Saints traveling to St. George descended the lighter, sloping rock on the opposite side of the river. Known as Lee's Backbone, the rock was described by Wilford Woodruff as "the worst hill Ridge or Mountain that I Ever attempted to Cross with a team and wagon on Earth."*[15]

**F.** *Lee's Ferry*

**G.** *Winsor Castle*

**H.** *Canaan Gap*

**G.** *The Winsor Castle fort was constructed at Pipe Spring by the Latter-day Saints as part of a tithing ranch. Its walls offered protection for those raising cattle. Today, the site is a national monument.* **H.** *Canaan Gap is a unique natural feature near the present-day cities of Hilldale, Utah, and Colorado City, Arizona. Saints following the "Honeymoon Trail" passed through the gap prior to descending the Hurricane Fault on the way to the St. George Temple.* **I.** *The background view with "Honeymoon Trail" marker shows the Warner Valley from on top of the Hurricane Fault looking in the direction of the route to St. George.* **J.** *After descending the Hurricane Fault, the "Honeymoon Trail" passed along the Warner Valley Gap Road and Fort Pearce. This 1866 fort was named for John D. L. Pearce and was built for protection during the Utah Blackhawk War.*[16] *By the time travelers reached this point, they were only about 15 miles from reaching their goal—the St. George Temple.*

**I.**

**J.** *Fort Pearce*

(continued from page 32 . . . )
9 Ricketts, 237.
10 Garrett, "The Honeymoon Trail," 24.
11 H. Dean Garrett, "Traveling the Honeymoon Trail: An Act of Faith and Love," in H. Dean Garrett and Clark V. Johnson, eds., *Regional Studies in Latter-day Saint History: Arizona* (Provo, Utah: Dept. of Church History and Doctrine, Brigham Young University, 1989), 98.
12 Alan Ferg "Brigham City, Winslow, and Prospects for Renewal," *Archaeology Southwest* 19, no. 2 (Spring 2005): 6.
13 L. John Nuttall, September 24, 1878, as cited in Tanner and Richards, *Colonization on the Little Colorado,* 141.
14 McClintock, 142.
15 Wilford Woodruff, cited in Ricketts, 10.
16 John Alton Peterson, *Utah's Black Hawk War* (Salt Lake City: Univ. of Utah Press, c1998), 298–99.

# *Keeping the Legacy Alive*

There is a vast parcel of land in northwestern Arizona isolated from the rest of the state by the Colorado River and the Grand Canyon known as the Arizona Strip. Its scenery is stunning, its desolation stark. There is but one paved road across 2.8 million acres of public land managed by the Arizona Strip Bureau of Land Management. Situated along the side of that lonely highway several miles west of Marble Canyon is an interpretive sign which reads: "This historic route was first used in the 1860s to connect the pioneer settlements of eastern and northern Arizona with those in Utah. From 1878 to 1928, the route was also used by Mormon faithful who traveled to the temple in St. George, Utah, to marry in the temple. During this period, it became known as the 'Honeymoon Trail' even though two weeks on horseback or a wagon probably wasn't much of a honeymoon." At this point, the text on the sign has mostly peeled away. This loss of information is sadly a story largely unknown to Latter-day Saints and others interested in the history of this region.

*Harry Hancock*

Two individuals who have shown remarkable dedication in preserving the stories of their forefathers are Arizonans Harry Hancock and Keith Crockett.

Harry Hancock, of Winslow, is a living legacy going back to his great grandfathers, Levi Ward Hancock of early Church history and Marcor Hansen Petersen, an emigrant from Denmark. For decades, "Handsome Harry," as he is known to the locals, managed the family ranch on property near what was once the settlement of Brigham City on the Little Colorado River, leasing 20 acres of what was the original settlement. Harry and his sons undertook the project of rebuilding the fortress that surrounded Brigham City on its original site. (See image on page 33.) Some years ago the project was halted because of diminishing resources.

Harry knows the "Honeymoon Trail" as well as anyone. He not only traversed it on horseback six or seven times, he *ran* a sizeable section of the trail once. Harry has served faithfully in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. After nearly 30 years, he still serves as patriarch of the Winslow, Arizona Stake.

Keith Crocket of Pima, Arizona, has also explored and photographed the "Honeymoon Trail" on horseback and motorized vehicle. He has researched other pioneer sites in the area including the Yellow Jacket Trail, Fort Apache, and the sawmill sites on Mt. Graham. Keith can take you to the rocks where the pioneers etched their names—including his own ancestors.

Keith served for many years as a teacher and administrator in the Church Educational System of the LDS Church and as a member of the Second Quorum of the Seventy, from which he has since been honorably released. Often times, Keith can be found in Thatcher, Arizona, at the Graham County Historical Society Museum, where he serves as a docent and member of the board. He will likely be organizing his slides of the "Honeymoon Trail" in preparation for an upcoming presentation.

*Keith Crockett*

*Above left:*
"On a Firm Foundation"
George Washington Equestrian Monument located at Freedom's Foundation, Valley Forge, Pennsylvania. Sculpted by Stan Watts and Kim Corpany.
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1/6th Life Size: $1600; 1/4 Life Size: $3400; 1/2 Life Size: $19,000.
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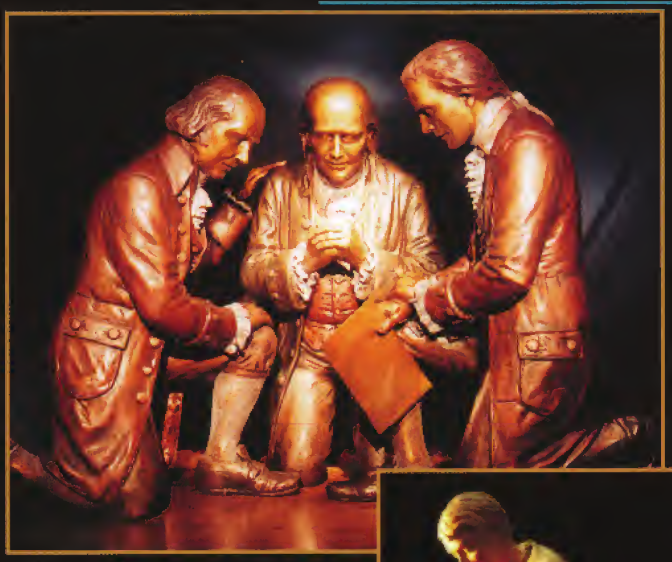

*Above right:*
"Appeal to Divine Providence"
John Adams, Ben Franklin, and Thomas Jefferson
1/2 Life Size, Limited Edition Bronze of 50, 20 Available;
1/4 Life Size, Limited Edition Bronze.

*Right inset:*
"Joseph's First Prayer"
1/8 Life Size; 1/4 Life Size; 1/2 Life Size (35"High)
Limited Edition Bronze of 35
30 Available.

*Above:*
"Lay Up Your Treasures in Heaven"
1/8 Life Size: (6" High).

*Above:*
"The Handcart Company"
Limited Edition Bronze
1/4 Life Size.

*Above:*
"Leaning into the Light"
Joseph Smith Jr. Reading James 1:5
Limited Edition Bronze
1/3 Life Size.

*Above:*
"Bodell Mortensen"
Commemorating the Handcart Pioneers
Limited Edition Bronze 1/4 Life Size $1600.

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*Above:*
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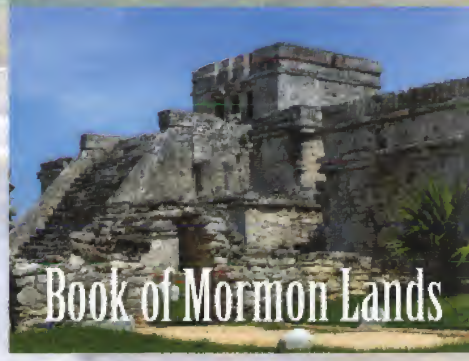


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